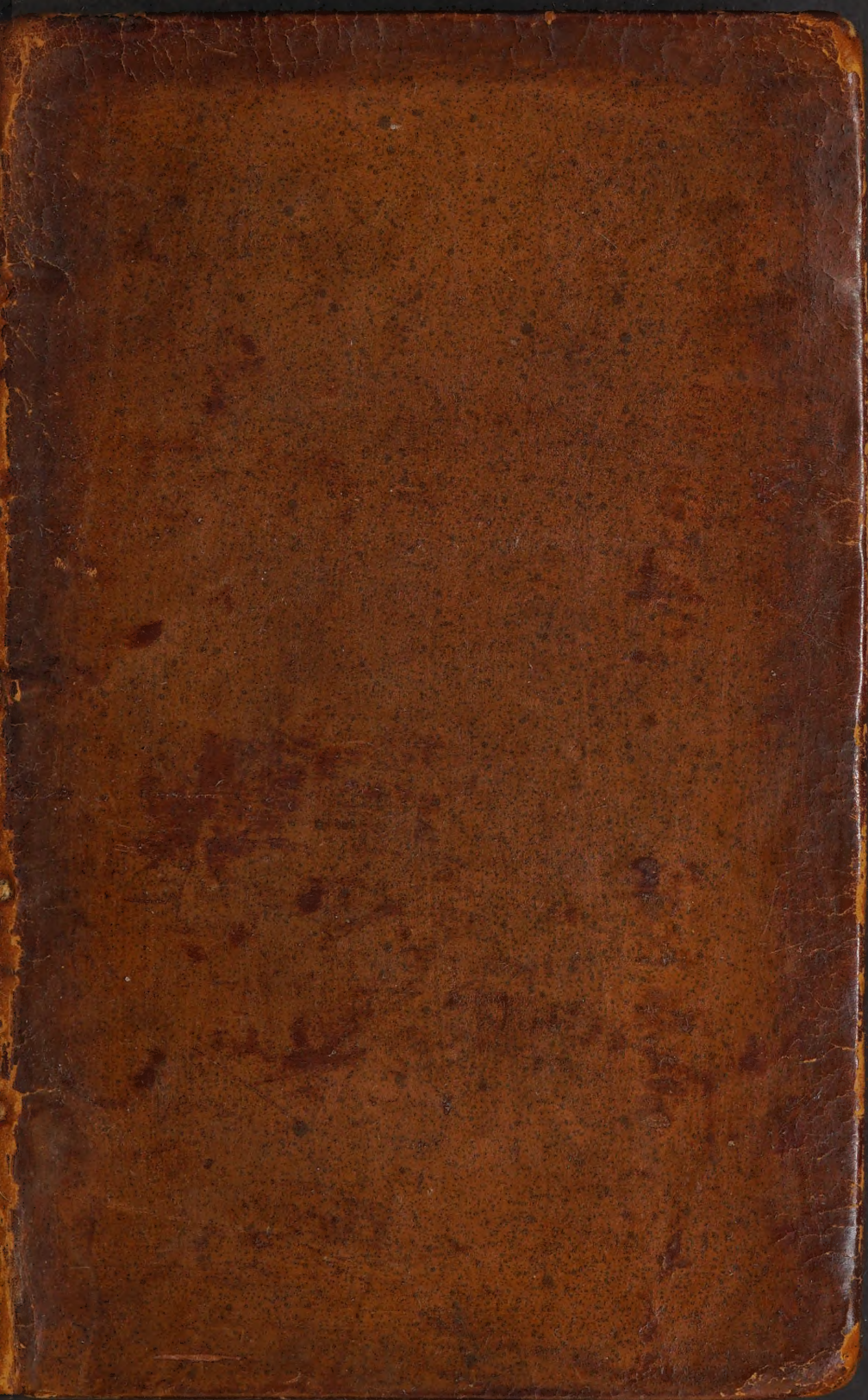














Vol. 1

Fragments of Ancient Poetry
Translated from Gaelic

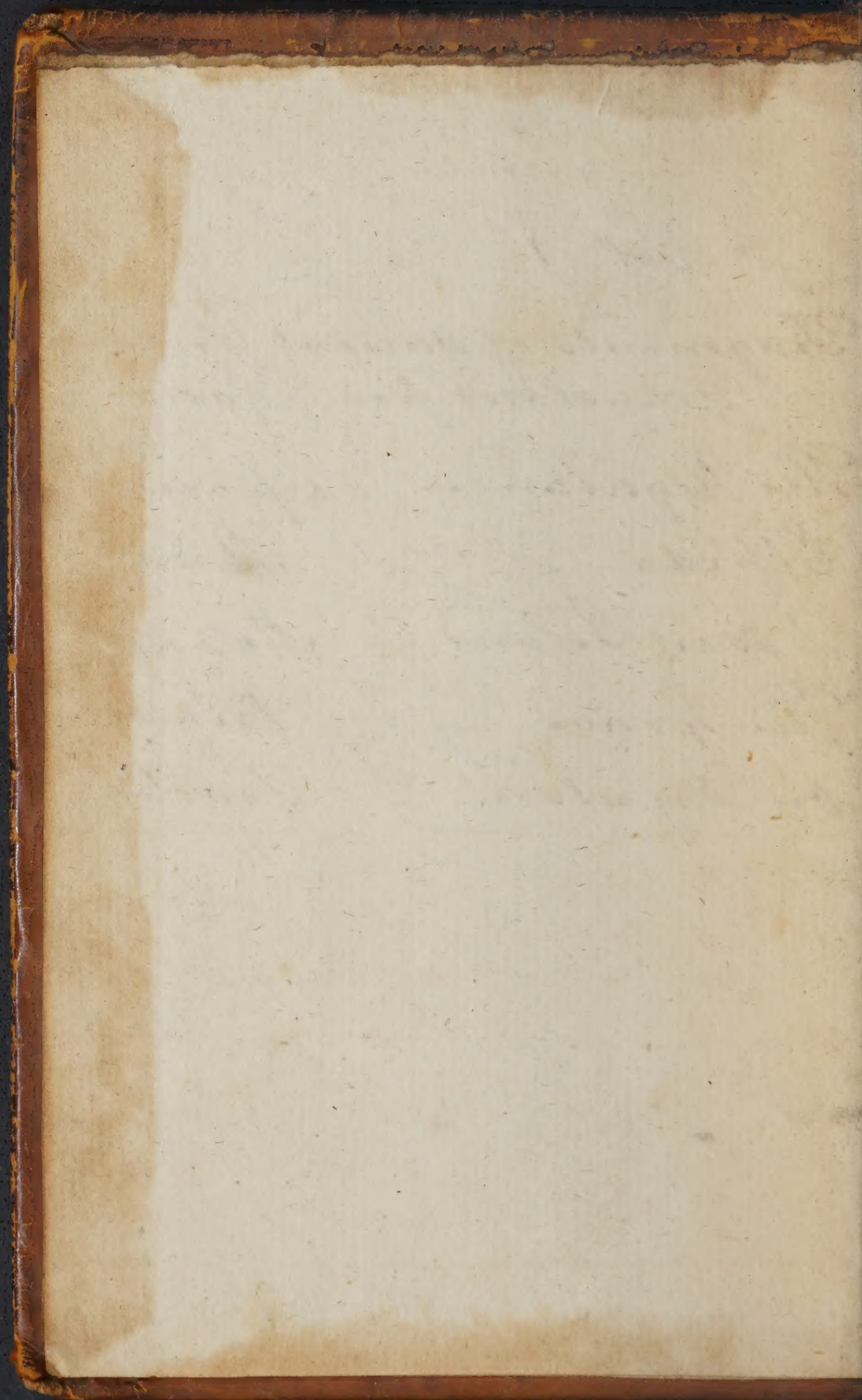
The Highlander a poem

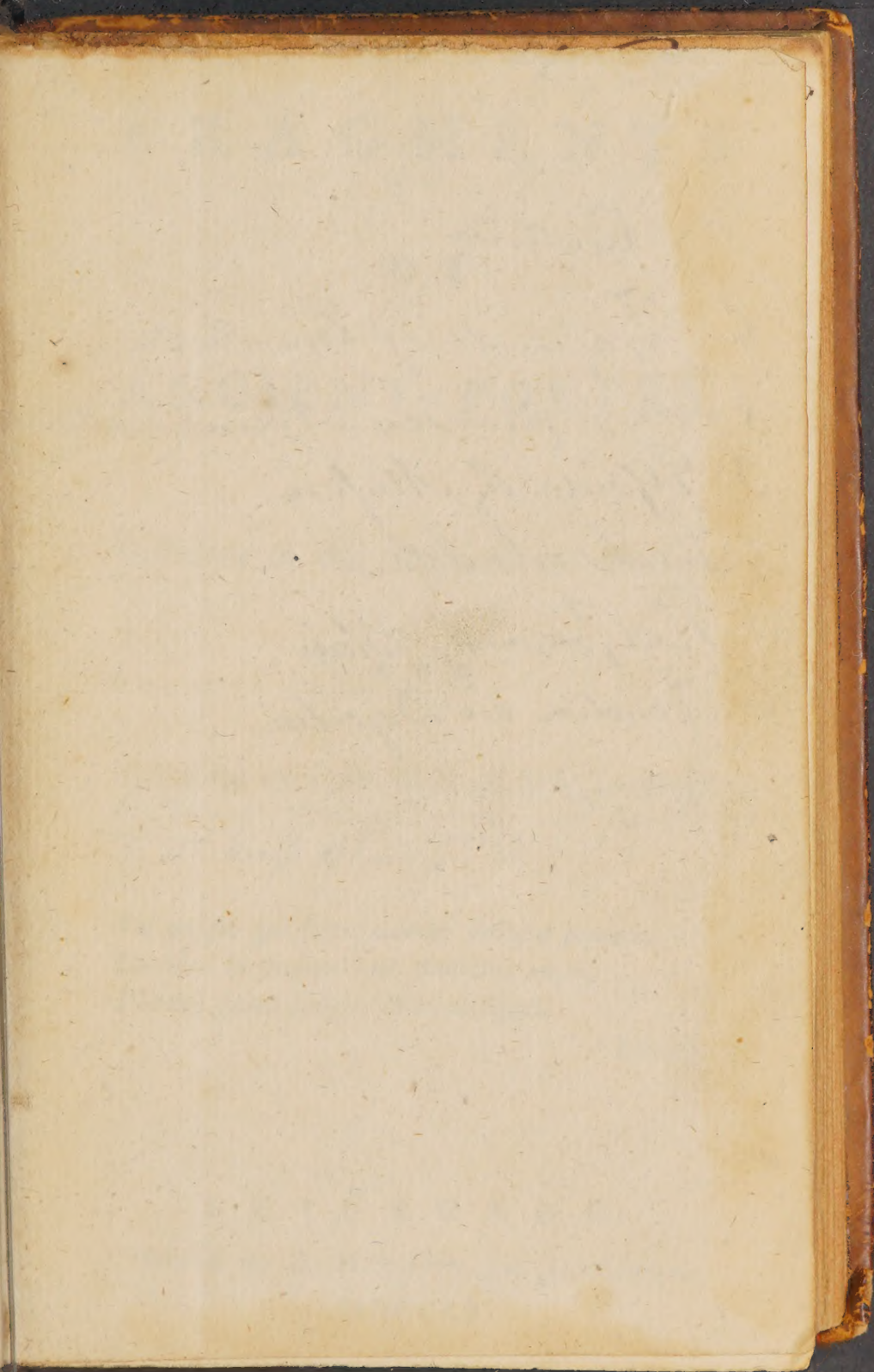
Elfrida ——— Mason

Desert Island ——— Metastasio

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W. D. Symonds
F R A G M E N T S

O F

A N C I E N T P O E T R Y,

Collected in the Highlands of Scotland,

A N D

Translated from the Galic or Erse Language,
*by James Macpherson and published
by Dr Hugh Blair F.R.S.*

*Vos quoque qui fortes animas, belloque peremptas
Laudibus in longum vates dimittitis ævum,
Plurima securi fudistis carmina Bardis.*

LUCAN.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed for G. HAMILTON and J. BALFOUR.

MDCCLX.

P R E F A C E.

by Dr Blair

THE public may depend on the following fragments as genuine remains of ancient Scottish poetry. The date of their composition cannot be exactly ascertained. Tradition, in the country where they were written, refers them to an æra of the most remote antiquity: and this tradition is supported by the spirit and strain of the poems themselves; which abound with those ideas, and paint those manners, that belong to the most early state of society. The diction too, in the original, is very obsolete; and differs widely from the style of such poems as have been written in the same language two or three centuries ago. They were certainly composed before the establish-

ment of clanship in the northern part of Scotland, which is itself very ancient; for had clans been then formed and known, they must have made a considerable figure in the work of a Highland Bard; whereas there is not the least mention of them in these poems. It is remarkable that there are found in them no allusions to the Christian religion or worship; indeed, few traces of religion of any kind. One circumstance seems to prove them to be coeval with the very infancy of Christianity in Scotland. In a fragment of the same poems, which the translator has seen, a Culdee or Monk is represented as desirous to take down in writing from the mouth of Oseian, who is the principal personage in several of the following fragments, his warlike achievements and those of his family. But Oseian treats the monk and his religion with disdain, telling him, that the deeds of such great men were subjects too
high

high to be recorded by him, or by any of his religion: A full proof that Christianity was not as yet established in the country.

Though the poems now published appear as detached pieces in this collection, there is ground to believe that most of them were originally episodes of a greater work which related to the wars of Fingal. Concerning this hero innumerable traditions remain, to this day, in the Highlands of Scotland. The story of Ofcian, his son, is so generally known, that to describe one in whom the race of a great family ends, it has passed into a proverb; “Ofcian the last
“of the heroes.”

There can be no doubt that these poems are to be ascribed to the Bards; a race of men well known to have continued throughout many ages in Ireland
and

and the north of Scotland. Every chief or great man had in his family a Bard or poet, whose office it was to record in verse, the illustrious actions of that family. By the succession of these Bards, such poems were handed down from race to race; some in manuscript, but more by oral tradition. And tradition, in a country so free of intermixture with foreigners, and among a people so strongly attached to the memory of their ancestors, has preserved many of them in a great measure incorrupted to this day.

They are not set to music, nor sung. The versification in the original is simple; and to such as understand the language, very smooth and beautiful. Rhyme is seldom used: but the cadence, and the length of the line varied, so as to suit the sense. The translation is extremely literal. Even the arrangement of the words in the original has been imitated;

imitated; to which must be imputed some inversions in the style, that otherwise would not have been chosen.

Of the poetical merit of these fragments nothing shall here be said. Let the public judge, and pronounce. It is believed, that, by a careful inquiry, many more remains of ancient genius, no less valuable than those now given to the world, might be found in the same country where these have been collected. In particular there is reason to hope that one work of considerable length, and which deserves to be styled an heroic poem, might be recovered and translated, if encouragement were given to such an undertaking. The subject is, an invasion of Ireland by Swarthan King of Lochlyn; which is the name of Denmark in the Erse language. Cuchulaid, the General or Chief of the Irish tribes, upon intelligence of the invasion,

invasion, assembles his forces. Councils are held; and battles fought. But after several unsuccessful engagements, the Irish are forced to submit. At length, Fingal King of Scotland, called in this poem, "The Desert of the hills," arrives with his ships to assist Cuchulaid. He expels the Danes from the country; and returns home victorious. This poem is held to be of greater antiquity than any of the rest that are preserved: And the author speaks of himself as present in the expedition of Fingal. The three last poems in the collection are fragments which the translator obtained of this epic poem; and though very imperfect, they were judged not unworthy of being inserted. If the whole were recovered, it might serve to throw considerable light upon the Scottish and Irish antiquities.

FRAGMENT

I.

SHILRIC, VINVELA.

VINVELA.

MY love is a son of the hill.
He pursues the flying deer.
His grey dogs are panting
around him; his bow-string sounds in
the wind. Whether by the fount of
the rock, or by the stream of the
mountain thou liest; when the rushes are
nodding with the wind, and the mist
is flying over thee, let me approach
my love unperceived, and see him
from the rock. Lovely I saw thee
first by the aged oak; thou wert re-
turning tall from the chace; the fairest
among thy friends.

B

SHILRIC

SHILRIC.

WHAT voice is that I hear? that voice like the summer-wind. — I sit not by the nodding rushes; I hear not the fount of the rock. Afar, Vinvela, afar I go to the wars of Fingal. My dogs attend me no more. No more I tread the hill. No more from on high I see thee, fair-moving by the stream of the plain; bright as the bow of heaven; as the moon on the western wave.

VINVELA.

THEN thou art gone, O Shilric! and I am alone on the hill. The deer are seen on the brow; void of fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind; no more the rustling tree. The hunter is far removed;
he

[II]

he is in the field of graves. Strangers! sons of the waves! spare my lovely Shilric.

SHILRIC.

If fall I must in the field, raise high my grave, Vinvela. Grey stones, and heaped-up earth, shall mark me to future times. When the hunter shall sit by the mound, and produce his food at noon, "some warrior rests here," he will say; and my fame shall live in his praise. Remember me, Vinvela, when low on earth I lie!

VINVELA.

Yes!—I will remember thee—indeed my Shilric will fall. What shall I do, my love! when thou art gone for ever? Through these hills I will go at noon: I will go through the silent heath. There:

I will see where often thou sattest return-
ing from the chace. Indeed, my Shil-
ric will fall; but I will remember
him.

II.

I SIT by the mossy fountain; on the top of the hill of winds. One tree is rustling above me. Dark waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer descend from the hill. No hunter at a distance is seen; no whistling cow-herd is nigh. It is mid-day: but all is silent. Sad are my thoughts as I sit alone. Didst thou but appear, O my love, a wanderer on the heath! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee; thy bosom heaving on the sight; thine eyes full of tears for thy friends, whom the mist of the hill had concealed! Thee I would comfort, my love, and bring thee to thy father's house.

BUT is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright

as

as the moon in autumn, as the sun in
a summer-storm? — She speaks: but
how weak her voice! like the breeze
in the reeds of the pool. Hark!

RETURNEST thou safe from the war?
Where are thy friends, my love? I
heard of thy death on the hill; I heard
and mourned thee, Shilric!

YES, my fair, I return; but I alone
of my race. Thou shalt see them no
more: their graves I raised on the plain.
But why art thou on the desert hill?
why on the heath, alone?

ALONE I am, O Shilric! alone in the
winter-house. With grief for thee I ex-
pired. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb.

SHE fleets, she fails away; as grey
mist before the wind! — and, wilt thou
not

not stay, my love? Stay and behold
my tears? fair thou appearest, my love!
fair thou wast, when alive!

By the mossy fountain I will sit ; on
the top of the hill of winds. When
mid-day is silent around, converse, O
my love, with me! come on the wings
of the gale! on the blast of the moun-
tain, come! Let me hear thy voice, as
thou passest, when mid-day is silent a-
round.

III.

EVENING is grey on the hills. The north wind resounds through the woods. White clouds rise on the sky: the trembling snow descends. The river howls afar, along its winding course. Sad, by a hollow rock, the grey-hair'd Carryl sat. Dry fern waves over his head; his seat is in an aged birch. Clear to the roaring winds he lifts his voice of woe.

TOSSED on the wavy ocean is He, the hope of the isles; Malcolm, the support of the poor; foe to the proud in arms! Why hast thou left us behind? why live we to mourn thy fate? We might have heard, with thee, the voice of the deep; have seen the oozy rock.

SAD on the sea-beat shore thy spouse looketh for thy return. The time of
thy

thy promise is come ; the night is gathering around. But no white sail is on the sea ; no voice is heard except the blustering winds. Low is the foul of the war ! Wet are the locks of youth ! By the foot of some rock thou liest ; washed by the waves as they come. Why, ye winds, did ye bear him on the desert rock ? Why, ye waves, did ye roll over him ?

BUT, Oh ! what voice is that ? Who rides on that meteor of fire ! Green are his airy limbs. It is he ! it is the ghost of Malcolm !—Rest, lovely soul, rest on the rock ; and let me hear thy voice !—He is gone, like a dream of the night. I see him through the trees. Daughter of Reynold ! he is gone. Thy spouse shall return no more. No more shall his hounds come from the hill, forerunners of their master. No more from the distant rock shall his

C

voice

voice greet thine ear. Silent is he in
the deep, unhappy daughter of Rey-
nold!

I will sit by the stream of the plain.
Ye rocks! hang over my head. Hear
my voice, ye trees! as ye bend on the
shaggy hill. My voice shall preserve
the praise of him, the hope of the
isles.

IV.

CONNAL, CRIMORA,

CRIMORA.

WHO cometh from the hill, like
 a cloud tinged with the beam
 of the west? Whose voice is that, loud
 as the wind, but pleasant as the harp of
 Carryl? It is my love in the light of
 steel; but sad is his darkened brow.
 Live the mighty race of Fingal? or
 what disturbs my Connal?

CONNAL.

THEY live. I saw them return from
 the chace, like a stream of light. The
 sun was on their shields: In a line they
 descended the hill. Loud is the voice of

the youth; the war, my love, is near.
 To-morrow the enormous Dargo comes
 to try the force of our race. The race of
 Fingal he defies; the race of battle and
 wounds.

CRIMORA.

CONNAL, I saw his sails like grey mist
 on the fable wave. They came to land.
 Connal, many are the warriors of
 Dargo!

CONNAL.

BRING me thy father's shield; the iron
 shield of Rinval; that shield like the
 full moon when it is darkened in the
 sky.

CRIMORA.

CRIMORA.

THAT shield I bring, O Connal ; but
it did not defend my father. By the
spear of Gauror he fell. Thou mayst
fall, O Connal !

CONNAL.

FALL indeed I may : But raise my
tomb, Crimora. Some stones, a mound
of earth, shall keep my memory.
Though fair thou art, my love, as the
light ; more pleasant than the gale of
the hill ; yet I will not stay. Raise my
tomb, Crimora.

CRIMORA.

THEN give me those arms of light ;
that sword, and that spear of steel. I
shall meet Dargo with thee, and aid my
lovely

lovely Connal. Farewell, ye rocks of
 Ardven! ye deer! and ye streams of
 the hill!—We shall return no more.
 Our tombs are distant far.

V.

AUTUMN is dark on the mountains ;
grey mist rests on the hills. The
whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark
rolls the river through the narrow plain.
A tree stands alone on the hill, and
marks the grave of Connal. The leaves
whirl round with the wind, and strew
the grave of the dead. At times are
seen here the ghosts of the deceased,
when the musing hunter alone stalks
slowly over the heath.

WHO can reach the source of thy
race, O Connal? and who recount thy
Fathers? Thy family grew like an oak
on the mountain, which meeteth the
wind with its lofty head. But now it
is torn from the earth. Who shall sup-
ply the place of Connal?

HERE

HERE was the din of arms; and here the groans of the dying. Mournful are the wars of Fingal! O Connal! it was here thou didst fall. Thine arm was like a storm; thy sword, a beam of the sky; thy height, a rock on the plain; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder than a storm was thy voice, when thou confoundedst the field. Warriors fell by thy sword, as the thistle by the staff of a boy.

DARGO the mighty came on, like a cloud of thunder. His brows were contracted and dark. His eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright rose their swords on each side; dire was the clang of their steel.

THE daughter of Rinval was near; Crimora, bright in the armour of man; her hair loose behind, her bow in her hand. She followed the youth to the war,

war, Connal her much beloved. She drew the string on Dargo; but erring pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain; like a rock from the shaggy hill. What shall she do, hapless maid!—He bleeds; her Connal dies. All the night long she cries, and all the day, O Connal, my love, and my friend! With grief the sad mourner died.

EARTH heretofore incloseth the loveliest pair on the hill. The grass grows between the stones of their tomb; I sit in the mournful shade. The wind sighs through the grass; and their memory rushes on my mind. Undisturbed you now sleep together; in the tomb of the mountain you rest alone.

VI.

SON of the noble Fingal, Ofcian,
 Prince of men! what tears run down
 the cheeks of age? what shades thy
 mighty soul?

MEMORY, son of Alpin, memory
 wounds the aged. Of former times are
 my thoughts; my thoughts are of the
 noble Fingal. The race of the king re-
 turn into my mind, and wound me with
 remembrance.

ONE day, returned from the sport of
 the mountains, from pursuing the sons
 of the hill, we covered this heath with
 our youth. Fingal the mighty was here,
 and Ofeur, my son, great in war. Fair
 on our sight from the sea, at once, a
 virgin came. Her breast was like the
 snow of one night. Her cheek like the
 bud

bud of the rose. Mild was her blue rolling eye: but sorrow was big in her heart.

FINGAL renowned in war! she cries, sons of the king, preserve me! Speak secure, replies the king, daughter of beauty, speak: our ear is open to all: our swords redress the injured. I fly from Ullin, she cries, from Ullin famous in war. I fly from the embrace of him who would debase my blood. Cremor, the friend of men, was my father; Cremor the Prince of Inverne.

FINGAL's younger sons arose; Carryl expert in the bow; Fillan beloved of the fair; and Fergus first in the race. — Who from the farthest Lochlyn? who to the seas of Molochasquir? who dares hurt the maid whom the sons of Fingal guard? Daughter of beauty, rest

D 2 secure;

secure; rest in peace, thou fairest of women.

FAR in the blue distance of the deep, some spot appeared like the back of the ridge-wave. But soon the ship increased on our sight. The hand of Ullin drew her to land. The mountains trembled as he moved. The hills shook at his steps. Dire rattled his armour around him. Death and destruction were in his eyes. His stature like the roe of Morven. He moved in the lightning of steel.

OUR warriors fell before him, like the field before the reapers. Fingal's three sons he bound. He plunged his sword into the fair-one's breast. She fell as a wreath of snow before the sun in spring. Her bosom heaved in death; her soul came forth in blood.

OSCUR my son came down; the
 mighty in battle descended. His armour
 rattled as thunder; and the lightning of
 his eyes was terrible. There, was the
 clashing of swords; there, was the voice
 of steel. They struck and they thrust;
 they digged for death with their swords.
 But death was distant far, and delayed
 to come. The sun began to decline;
 and the cow-herd thought of home.
 Then Oscur's keen steel found the heart
 of Ullin. He fell like a mountain-oak
 covered over with glistering frost: He
 shone like a rock on the plain.—
 Here the daughter of beauty lieth; and
 here the bravest of men. Here one
 day ended the fair and the valiant.
 Here rest the pursuer and the pur-
 sued.

SON of Alpin! the woes of the aged
 are many: their tears are for the past.
 This raised my sorrow, warrior; me-
 mory

mory awaked my grief. Oſcur my
ſon was brave; but Oſcur is now no
more. Thou haſt heard my grief, O
ſon of Alpin; forgive the tears of the
aged.

VII.

WHY openest thou afresh the spring of my grief, O son of Alpin, inquiring how Oſcur fell? My eyes are blind with tears ; but memory beams on my heart. How can I relate the mournful death of the head of the people ! Prince of the warriors, Oſcur my ſon, ſhall I ſee thee no more !

HE fell as the moon in a ſtorm ; as the ſun from the miſt of his courſe, when clouds riſe from the waſte of the waves, when the blackneſs of the ſtorm inwraps the rocks of Ardannider. I, like an ancient oak on Morven, I moulder alone in my place. The blaſt hath lopped my branches away ; and I tremble at the wings of the north. Prince of the warriors, Oſcur my ſon ! ſhall I ſee thee no more !

DERMID

DERMID and Oseur were one: They reaped the battle together. Their friendship was strong as their steel; and death walked between them to the field. They came on the foe like two rocks falling from the brows of Ardven. Their swords were stained with the blood of the valiant: warriors fainted at their names. Who was a match for Oseur, but Dermid? and who for Dermid, but Oseur?

THEY killed mighty Dargo in the field; Dargo before invincible. His daughter was fair as the morn; mild as the beam of night. Her eyes, like two stars in a shower: her breath, the gale of spring: her breasts, as the new-fallen snow floating on the moving heath. The warriors saw her, and loved; their souls were fixed on the maid. Each loved her, as his fame; each must possess her or die. But her soul was fixed

on

on Ofcur; my son was the youth of
her love. She forgot the blood of her
father; and loved the hand that flew
him.

SON of Ofcian, said Dermid, I love;
O Ofcur, I love this maid. But her
soul cleaveth unto thee; and nothing
can heal Dermid. Here, pierce this
bosom, Ofcur; relieve me, my friend,
with thy sword.

MY sword, son of Morny, shall ne-
ver be stained with the blood of Der-
mid.

WHO then is worthy to slay me, O
Ofcur son of Ofcian? Let not my life
pass away unknown. Let none but Of-
cur slay me. Send me with honour to
the grave, and let my death be renown-
ed.

Edm'd. DERMID,

DERMID, make use of thy sword;
 son of Morny, wield thy steel. Would
 that I fell with thee! that my death
 came from the hand of Dermid!

THEY fought by the brook of the
 mountain; by the streams of Branno.
 Blood tinged the silvery stream, and
 cruddled round the mossy stones. Der-
 mid the graceful fell; fell, and smiled in
 death.

AND fallest thou, son of Morny;
 fallest thou by Oscur's hand! Dermid
 invincible in war, thus do I see thee fall!
 —He went, and returned to the maid
 whom he loved; returned, but she per-
 ceived his grief.

WHY that gloom, son of Ofsian?
 what shades thy mighty soul?

THOUGH once renowned for the bow,

O maid, I have lost my fame. Fixed on
a tree by the brook of the hill, is the
shield of Gormur the brave, whom in
battle I flew. I have wasted the day
in vain, nor could my arrow pierce it.

LET me try, son of Ofcian, the skill
of Dargo's daughter. My hands were
taught the bow: my father delighted in
my skill.

SHE went. He stood behind the
shield. Her arrow flew and pierced his
breast *.

* Nothing was held by the ancient Highlanders more
essential to their glory, than to die by the hand of some
person worthy or renowned. This was the occasion
of Ofcu's contriving to be slain by his mistress, now
that he was weary of life. In those early times
suicide was utterly unknown among that people, and
no traces of it are found in the old poetry. Whence
the translator suspects the account that follows of the
daughter of Dargo killing herself, to be the interpola-
tion of some later Bard.

BLESSED be that hand of snow ; and
 blessed thy bow of yew ! I fall resolved
 on death : and who but the daughter of
 Dargo was worthy to slay me ? Lay me
 in the earth, my fair-one ; lay me by
 the side of Dermid.

OSCUR ! I have the blood, the soul
 of the mighty Dargo. Well pleased I
 can meet death. My sorrow I can end
 thus.—She pierced her white bosom
 with steel. She fell ; she trembled ; and
 died.

By the brook of the hill their graves
 are laid ; a birch's unequal shade covers
 their tomb. Often on their green earth-
 en tombs the branchy sons of the moun-
 tain feed, when mid-day is all in flames,
 and silence is over all the hills.

VIII.

BY the side of a rock on the hill, beneath the aged trees, old Ofcian sat on the moss; the last of the race of Fingal. Sightless are his aged eyes; his beard is waving in the wind. Dull through the leafless trees he heard the voice of the north. Sorrow revived in his soul: he began and lamented the dead.

How hast thou fallen like an oak, with all thy branches round thee! Where is Fingal the King? where is Ofcir my son? where are all my race? Alas! in the earth they lie. I feel their tombs with my hands. I hear the river below murmuring hoarsely over the stones. What dost thou, O river, to me? Thou bringest back the memory of the past.

THE race of Fingal stood on thy banks, like a wood in a fertile soil. Keen were their spears of steel. Hardy was he who dared to encounter their rage. Fillan the great was there. Thou Oscur wert there, my son ! Fingal himself was there, strong in the grey locks of years. Full rose his sinewy limbs ; and wide his shoulders spread. The unhappy met with his arm, when the pride of his wrath arose.

THE son of Morny came ; Gaul, the tallest of men. He stood on the hill like an oak ; his voice was like the streams of the hill. Why reigneth alone, he cries, the son of the mighty Corval ? Fingal is not strong to save : he is no support for the people. I am strong as a storm in the ocean ; as a whirlwind on the hill. Yield, son of Corval ; Fingal, yield to me.

OSCUR

OSCUR stood forth to meet him ;
 my son would meet the foe. But Fingal
 came in his strength, and smiled at
 the vaunter's boast. They threw their
 arms round each other ; they struggled
 on the plain. The earth is ploughed with
 their heels. Their bones crack as the boat
 on the ocean, when it leaps from wave to
 wave. Long did they toil ; with night,
 they fell on the sounding plain ; as two
 oaks, with their branches mingled, fall
 crashing from the hill. The tall son
 of Mornny is bound ; the aged over-
 came.

FAIR with her locks of gold, her
 smooth neck, and her breasts of snow ;
 fair, as the spirits of the hill when at
 silent noon they glide along the heath ;
 fair, as the rain-bow of heaven ; came
 Minvane the maid. Fingal ! she soft-
 ly saith, loose me my brother Gaul.
 Loose me the hope of my race, the ter-
 ror

ror of all but Fingal. Can I, replies the King, can I deny the lovely daughter of the hill? take thy brother, O Minvane, thou fairer than the snow of the north!

SUCH, Fingal! were thy words; but thy words I hear no more. Sightless I sit by thy tomb. I hear the wind in the wood; but no more I hear my friends. The cry of the hunter is over. The voice of war is ceased.

IX.

THOU askest, fair daughter of the isles ! whose memory is preserved in these tombs ? The memory of Ronnan the bold, and Connan the chief of men ; and of her, the fairest of maids, Rivine the lovely and the good. The wing of time is laden with care. Every moment hath woes of its own. Why seek we our grief from afar ? or give our tears to those of other times ? But thou commandest, and I obey, O fair daughter of the isles !

CONAR was mighty in war. Caul was the friend of strangers. His gates were open to all ; midnight darkened not on his barred door. Both lived upon the sons of the mountains. Their bow was the support of the poor.

F

CONNAN

CONNAN was the image of Conar's soul. Caul was renewed in Ronnan his son. Rivine the daughter of Conar was the love of Ronnan; her brother Connan was his friend. She was fair as the harvest-moon setting in the seas of Molochasquir. Her soul was settled on Ronnan; the youth was the dream of her nights.

RIVINE, my love! says Ronnan, I go to my king in Norway*. A year and a day shall bring me back. Wilt thou be true to Ronnan?

RONNAN! a year and a day I will spend in sorrow. Ronnan, behave like a man, and my soul shall exult in thy valour. Connan my friend, says Ronnan, wilt thou preserve Rivine thy sister? Durstan is in love with the maid;

* Supposed to be Fergus II. This fragment is reckoned not altogether so ancient as most of the rest.

and soon shall the sea bring the stranger to our coast.

RONNAN, I will defend: Do thou securely go.—He went. He returned on his day. But Durstan returned before him.

GIVE me thy daughter, Conar, says Durstan; or fear and feel my power.

HE who dares attempt my sister, says Connan, must meet this edge of steel. Unerring in battle is my arm: my sword, as the lightning of heaven.

RONNAN the warrior came; and much he threatened Durstan.

BUT, faith Euran the servant of gold, Ronnan! by the gate of the north shall Durstan this night carry thy fair-one away. Accursed, answers Ron-

nan, be this arm if death meet him not there.

CONNAN! faith Euran, this night shall the stranger carry thy sister away. My sword shall meet him, replies Connan, and he shall lie low on earth.

THE friends met by night, and they fought. Blood and sweat ran down their limbs as water on the mossy rock. Connan falls; and cries, O Durstan, be favourable to Rivine! — And is it my friend, cries Ronnan, I have slain? O Connan! I knew thee not.

He went, and he fought with Durstan. Day began to rise on the combat, when fainting they fell, and expired. Rivine came out with the morn; and — O what detains my Ronnan! — She saw him lying pale in his blood; and her brother lying pale by his side.

What

What could she say? what could she do? her complaints were many and vain. She opened this grave for the warriors; and fell into it herself, before it was closed; like the sun snatched away in a storm.

THOU hast heard this tale of grief,
O fair daughter of the isles! Rivine was
fair as thyself: shed on her grave a
tear.

X.

IT is night; and I am alone, forlorn
 on the hill of storms. The wind is
 heard in the mountain. The torrent
 shrieks down the rock. No hut receives
 me from the rain; forlorn on the hill of
 winds.

RISE, moon! from behind thy
 clouds; stars of the night, appear!
 Lead me, some light, to the place where
 my love rests from the toil of the chase!
 his bow near him, unstrung; his dogs
 panting around him. But here I must
 sit alone, by the rock of the mossy
 stream. The stream and the wind
 roar; nor can I hear the voice of my
 love.

WHY delayeth my Shalgar, why the
 son of the hill, his promise? Here is
 the

the rock ; and the tree ; and here the
 roaring stream. Thou promisedst with
 night to be here. Ah ! whither is my
 Shalgar gone ? With thee I would fly
 my father ; with thee, my brother of
 pride. Our race have long been foes ;
 but we are not foes, O Shalgar !

CEASE a little while, O wind ! stream,
 be thou silent a while ! let my voice be
 heard over the heath ; let my wanderer
 hear me. Shalgar ! it is I who call. Here
 is the tree, and the rock. Shalgar, my
 love ! I am here. Why delayest thou
 thy coming ? Alas ! no answer.

Lo ! the moon appeareth. The
 flood is bright in the vale. The rocks
 are grey on the face of the hill. But
 I see him not on the brow ; his dogs
 before him tell not that he is coming.
 Here I must sit alone.

BUT

BUT who are these that lie beyond me on the heath? Are they my love and my brother? — Speak to me, O my friends! they answer not. My soul is tormented with fears.—Ah! they are dead. Their swords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why hast thou slain my Shalgar? why, O Shalgar! hast thou slain my brother? Dear were ye both to me! speak to me; hear my voice, sons of my love! But alas! they are silent; silent for ever! Cold are their breasts of clay!

OH! from the rock of the hill; from the top of the mountain of winds, speak ye ghosts of the dead! speak, and I will not be afraid.—Whither are ye gone to rest? In what cave of the hill shall I find you?

I sit in my grief. I wait for morning in my tears. Rear the tomb, ye friends

friends of the dead ; but close it not
 till I come. My life flieth away like a
 dream : why should I stay behind ?
 Here shall I rest with my friends by the
 stream of the sounding rock. When
 night comes on the hill ; when the wind
 is up on the heath ; my ghost shall stand
 in the wind, and mourn the death of
 my friends. The hunter shall hear
 from his booth. He shall fear, but
 love my voice. For sweet shall my voice
 be for my friends ; for pleasant were
 they both to me.

as well as you. XI. I am sad indeed : nor small my
cause of woe ! — Kirmor, thou hast

SAD ! I am sad indeed : nor small my
cause of woe ! — Kirmor, thou hast
lost no son ; thou hast lost no daugh-
ter of beauty. Connar the valiant lives ;
and Annir the fairest of maids. The
boughs of thy family flourish, O Kir-
mor ! but Armyn is the last of his
race.

RISE, winds of autumn, rise ; blow
upon the dark heath ! streams of the
mountains, roar ! howl, ye tempests,
in the trees ! walk through broken
clouds, O moon ! show by intervals thy
pale face ! bring to my mind that sad
night, when all my children fell ; when
Arindel the mighty fell ; when Daura
the lovely died.

DAURA, my daughter ! thou wert
fair ;

fair; fair as the moon on the hills of Jura; white as the driven snow; sweet as the breathing gale. Armor renowned in war came, and fought Daura's love; he was not long denied; fair was the hope of their friends.

EARCH son of Odgal repined; for his brother was slain by Armor. He came disguised like a son of the sea; fair was his skiff on the wave; white his locks of age; calm his serious brow. Fairest of women, he said, lovely daughter of Armyn! a rock not distant in the sea, bears a tree on its side; red shines the fruit afar. There Armor waiteth for Daura. I came to fetch his love. Come, fair daughter of Armyn!

SHE went; and she called on Armor. Nought answered, but the son of the rock. Armor, my love! my love!

why tormentest thou me with fear?
 come, graceful son of Ardnart, come;
 'tis Daura who calleth thee! — Earch
 the traitor fled laughing to the land.
 She lifted up her voice, and cried for
 her brother and her father. Arindel!
 Armyn! none to relieve your Daura?

HER voice came over the sea. Arin-
 del my son descended from the hill;
 rough in the spoils of the chace. His
 arrows rattled by his side; his bow was
 in his hand; five grey dogs attended
 his steps. He saw fierce Earch on the
 shore; he seized and bound him to an
 oak. Thick fly the thongs of the hide
 around his limbs; he loads the wind
 with his groans.

ARINDEL ascends the surgy deep in
 this boat, to bring Daura to the land.
 Armor came in his wrath, and let fly
 the grey-feathered shaft. It sung; it
 sunk

Sunk in thy heart, O Arindel my son!
 for Earch the traitor thou diedst. What
 is thy grief, O Daura, when round
 thy feet is poured thy brother's blood!

THE boat is broken in twain by the
 waves. Armor plunges into the sea, to
 rescue his Daura or die. Sudden a blast
 from the hill comes over the waves.
 He sunk, and he rose no more.

ALONE, on the sea-beat rock, my
 daughter was heard to complain. Fre-
 quent and loud were her cries; nor
 could her father relieve her. All
 night I stood on the shore. All night I
 heard her cries. Loud was the wind;
 and the rain beat hard on the side of the
 mountain. Before morning appeared,
 her voice was weak. It died away, like
 the evening-breeze among the grass of
 the rocks. Spent with grief she expired.
 O lay me soon by her side.

WHEN

WHEN the storms of the mountain
 come ; when the north lifts the waves
 on high ; I sit by the sounding shore,
 and look on the fatal rock. Often by
 the setting moon I see the ghosts of
 my children. Indistinct, they walk in
 mournful conference together. Will
 none of you speak to me?— But they
 do not regard their father.

XII.

R. Y. N. O., A L P I N.

R Y N O.

THE wind and the rain are over:
 calm is the noon of day. The
 clouds are divided in heaven. Over
 the green hills flies the inconstant sun.
 Red through the stony vale comes
 down the stream of the hill. Sweet are
 thy murmurs, O stream! but more
 sweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice
 of Alpin the son of the song, mourning
 for the dead. Bent is his head of age,
 and red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou
 son of the song, why alone on the si-
 lent hill? why complaineſt thou, as a
 blaſt in the wood; as a wave on the
 lonely ſhore?

ALPIN.

A L P I N.

My tears, O Ryno! are for the dead;
 my voice, for the inhabitants of the
 grave. Tall thou art on the hill; fair
 among the sons of the plain. But thou
 shalt fall like Morar; and the mourner
 shalt sit on thy tomb. The hills shall
 know thee no more; thy bow shall lie in
 the hall, unstrung.

THOU wert swift, O Morar! as a
 roe on the hill; terrible as a meteor of
 fire. Thy wrath was as the storm of
 December. Thy sword in battle, as
 lightning in the field. Thy voice was
 like a stream after rain; like thunder
 on distant hills. Many fell by thy
 arm; they were consumed in the flames
 of thy wrath.

BUT when thou returnedst from war,
 how

How peaceful was thy brow ! Thy face
 was like the sun after rain ; like the
 moon in the silence of night ; calm as
 the breast of the lake when the loud
 wind is laid.

NARROW is thy dwelling now ; dark
 the place of thine abode. With three
 steps I compass thy grave, O thou who
 wast so great before ! Four stones with
 their heads of moss are the only memo-
 rial of thee. A tree with scarce a leaf,
 long grass which whistles in the wind,
 mark to the hunter's eye the grave of
 the mighty Morar. Morar ! thou art
 low indeed. Thou hast no mother to
 mourn thee ; no maid with her tears of
 love. Dead is she that brought thee
 forth. Fallen is the daughter of Mor-
 glan.

Who on his staff is this ? who is this,
 whose head is white with age, whose

H

eyes

eyes are red with tears, who quakes at every step? — It is thy father, O Morar! the father of none but thee. He heard of thy fame in battle; he heard of foes dispersed. He heard of Morar's fame; why did he not hear of his wound? Weep, thou father of Morar! weep; but thy son heareth thee not. Deep is the sleep of the dead; low their pillow of dust. No more shall he hear thy voice; no more shall he awake at thy call. When shall it be morn in the grave, to bid the slumberer awake?

FAREWELL, thou bravest of men! thou conqueror in the field! but the field shall see thee no more; nor the dark wood be lightened with the splendor of thy steel. Thou hast left no son. But the song shall preserve thy name. Future times shall hear of thee; they shall hear of the fallen Morar.

XIII *.

CUCHULAIÐ sat by the wall ; by the tree of the rustling leaf †. His spear leaned against the mossy rock. His shield lay by him on the grass. Whilst he thought on the mighty Carbre whom he slew in battle, the scout of the ocean came, Moran the son of Fi-thil.

RISE, Cuchulaid, rise ! I see the ships of Garve. Many are the foe, Cuchulaid ; many the sons of Lochlyn.

MORAN ! thou ever tremblest ; thy fears increase the foe. They are the ships of the Desert of hills arrived to assist Cuchulaid.

* This is the opening of the epic poem mentioned in the preface. The two following fragments are parts of some episodes of the same work.

† The aspen or poplar tree.

I saw their chief, says Moran, tall as a rock of ice. His spear is like that fir; his shield like the rising moon. He sat upon a rock on the shore, as a grey cloud upon the hill. Many, mighty man! I said, many are our heroes; Garve, well art thou named*, many are the sons of our king.

HE answered like a wave on the rock; who is like me here? The valiant live not with me; they go to the earth from my hand. The king of the Desert of hills alone can fight with Garve. Once we wrestled on the hill. Our heels overturned the wood. Rocks fell from their place, and rivulets changed their course. Three days we strove together; heroes stood at a distance, and feared. On the fourth, the King saith that I fell; but Garve saith, he

* Garve signifies a man of great size.

stood. Let Cuchulaid yield to him that
is strong as a storm.

No. I will never yield to man.
Cuchulaid will conquer or die. Go,
Moran, take my spear; strike the shield
of Caithbait which hangs before the
gate. It never rings in peace. My he-
roes shall hear on the hill. —

XIV.

DUCHOMMAR, MORNA.

D U C H O M M A R .

* **M**ORNA, thou fairest of women,
 daughter of Cormac-Carbre!
 why in the circle of stones, in the cave
 of the rock, alone? The stream mur-
 mureth hoarsely. The blast groaneth
 in the aged tree. The lake is troubled
 before thee. Dark are the clouds of
 the sky. But thou art like snow on
 the heath. Thy hair like a thin cloud
 of gold on the top of Cromleach. Thy

* The signification of the names in this fragment
 are; Dubhchomar, a black well-shaped man. Muirne
 or Morna, a woman beloved by all. Cormac-cairbre,
 an unequalled and rough warrior. Cromleach, a
 crooked hill. Mugruch, a surly gloomy man.
 Tarman, thunder. Moinie, soft in temper and per-
 son.

breasts

breasts like two smooth rocks on the hill which is seen from the stream of Brannuin. Thy arms, as two white pillars in the hall of Fingal.

MORNA.

WHENCE the son of Mugruch, Duchommar the most gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows of terror. Red thy rolling eyes. Does Garve appear on the sea? What of the foe, Duchommar?

DUCHOMMAR.

FROM the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the flying deer. Three have I slain with my bow; three with my panting dogs. Daughter of Cormac-Carbre, I love thee as my soul. I have slain a deer for thee. High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind.

MORNA.

MORNA.

GLOOMY son of Mugruch, Duchommar! I love thee not: hard is thy heart of rock; dark thy terrible brow. But Cadmor the son of Tarman, thou art the love of Morna! thou art like a sun-beam on the hill, in the day of the gloomy storm. Sawest thou the son of Tarman, lovely on the hill of the chace? Here the daughter of Cormac-Carbre waiteth the coming of Cadmor.

DUCHOMMAR.

AND long shall Morna wait. His blood is on my sword. I met him by the mossy stone, by the oak of the noisy stream. He fought; but I slew him; his blood is on my sword. High on the hill I will raise his tomb, daughter of Cormac-Carbre. But love thou the
son

son of Mugruch ; his arm is strong as a storm.

MORNA.

AND is the son of Tarman fallen ; the youth with the breast of snow ! the first in the chace of the hill ; the foe of the sons of the ocean ! — Duchommar, thou art gloomy indeed ; cruel is thy arm to me. — But give me that sword, son of Mugruch ; I love the blood of Cadmor.

[HE gives her the sword, with which she instantly stabs him.]

DUCHOMMAR.

DAUGHTER of Cormac-Carbre, thou hast pierced Duchommar ! the sword is cold in my breast ; thou hast killed the son of Mugruch. Give me to Moinie

I the

the maid ; for much she loved Duchommar. My tomb she will raise on the hill ; the hunter shall see it, and praise me. — But draw the sword from my side, Morna ; I feel it cold. —

[UPON her coming near him, he stabs her. As she fell, she plucked a stone from the side of the cave, and placed it betwixt them, that his blood might not be mingled with hers.]

XV.

* **W**HERE is Gealchossa my love, the daughter of Tuathal-Teachvar? I left her in the hall of the plain, when I fought with the hairy Ulfadha. Return soon, she said, O Lamderg! for here I wait in sorrow. Her white breast rose with sighs; her cheek was wet with tears. But she cometh not to meet Lamderg; or sooth his soul after battle. Silent is the hall of joy; I hear not the voice of the fíngir. Brann does not shake his chains at the gate, glad at the coming of his master. Where is Gealchossa my love, the daughter of Tuathal-Teachvar?

* The signification of the names in this fragment are; Gealchossack, white-legged. Tuathal-Teachtmhar, the surly, but fortunate man. Lambdearg, bloody-hand. Ulfadha, long beard. Fírchios, the conqueror of men.

LAMDERG! says Firchios son of Aydon, Gealchoffa may be on the hill; she and her chosen maids pursuing the flying deer.

FIRCHIOS! no noise I hear. No sound in the wood of the hill. No deer fly in my sight; no panting dog pursueth. I see not Gealchoffa my love; fair as the full moon setting on the hills of Cromleach. Go, Firchios! go to Allad*, the grey-haired son of the rock. He liveth in the circle of stones; he may tell of Gealchoffa.

ALLAD! saith Firchios, thou who dwellest in the rock; thou who tremblest alone; what saw thine eyes of age?

I saw, answered Allad the old, Ul-

* Allad is plainly a Druid consulted on this occasion.

Ullin the son of Carbre : He came like a cloud from the hill ; he hummed a furdy song as he came, like a storm in leafless wood. He entered the hall of the plain. Lamderg, he cried, most dreadful of men ! fight, or yield to Ullin. Lamderg, replied Gealchoffa, Lamderg is not here : he fights the hairy Ulfadha ; mighty man, he is not here. But Lamderg never yields ; he will fight the son of Carbre. Lovely art thou, O daughter of Tuathal-Teachvar ! said Ullin. I carry thee to the house of Carbre ; the valiant shall have Gealchoffa. Three days from the top of Cromleach will I call Lamderg to fight. The fourth, you belong to Ullin, if Lamderg die, or fly my sword.

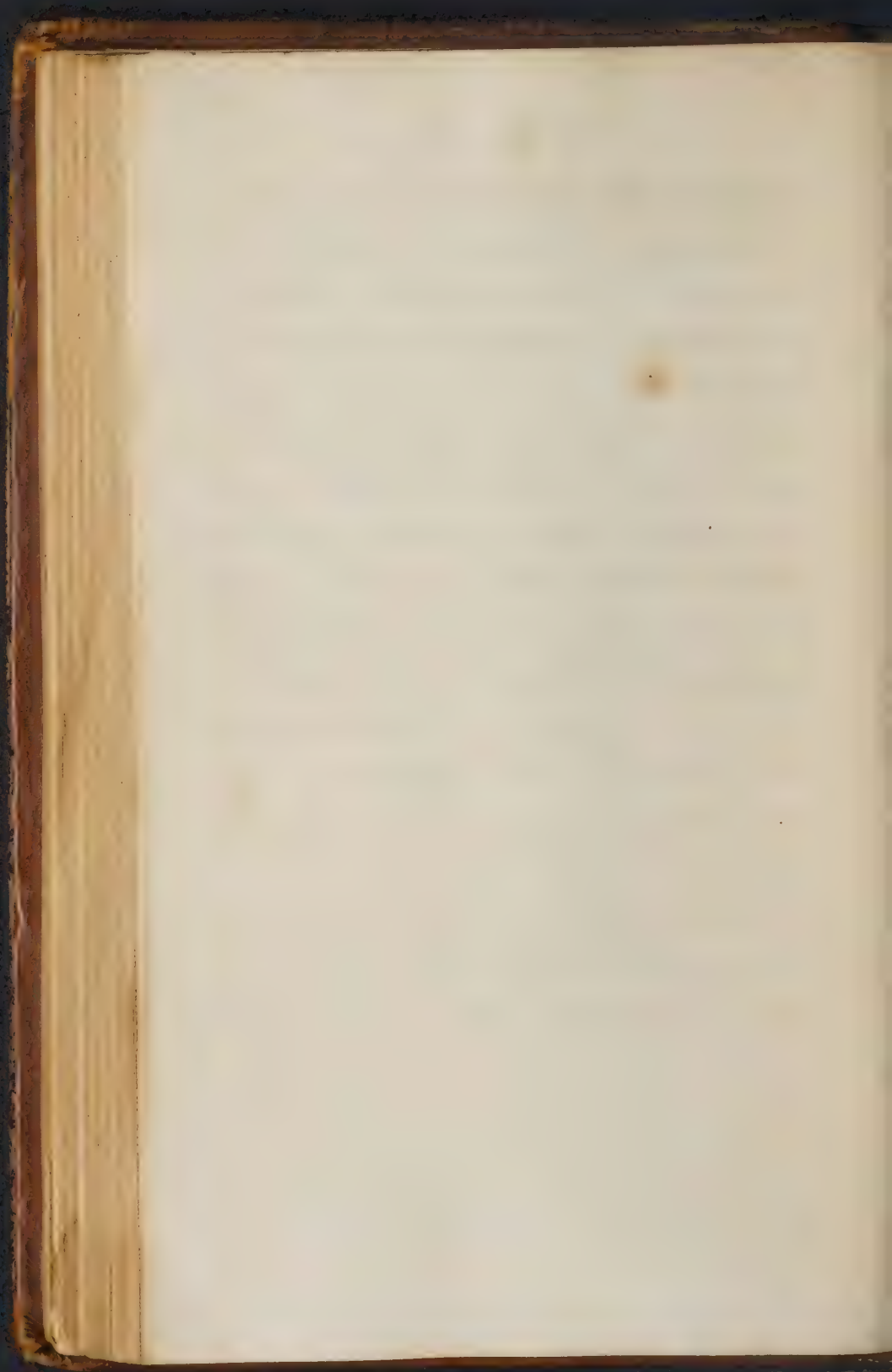
ALLAD ! peace to thy dreams ! —
 found the horn, Firchios ! — Ullin may
 hear, and meet me on the top of Crom-
 leach.

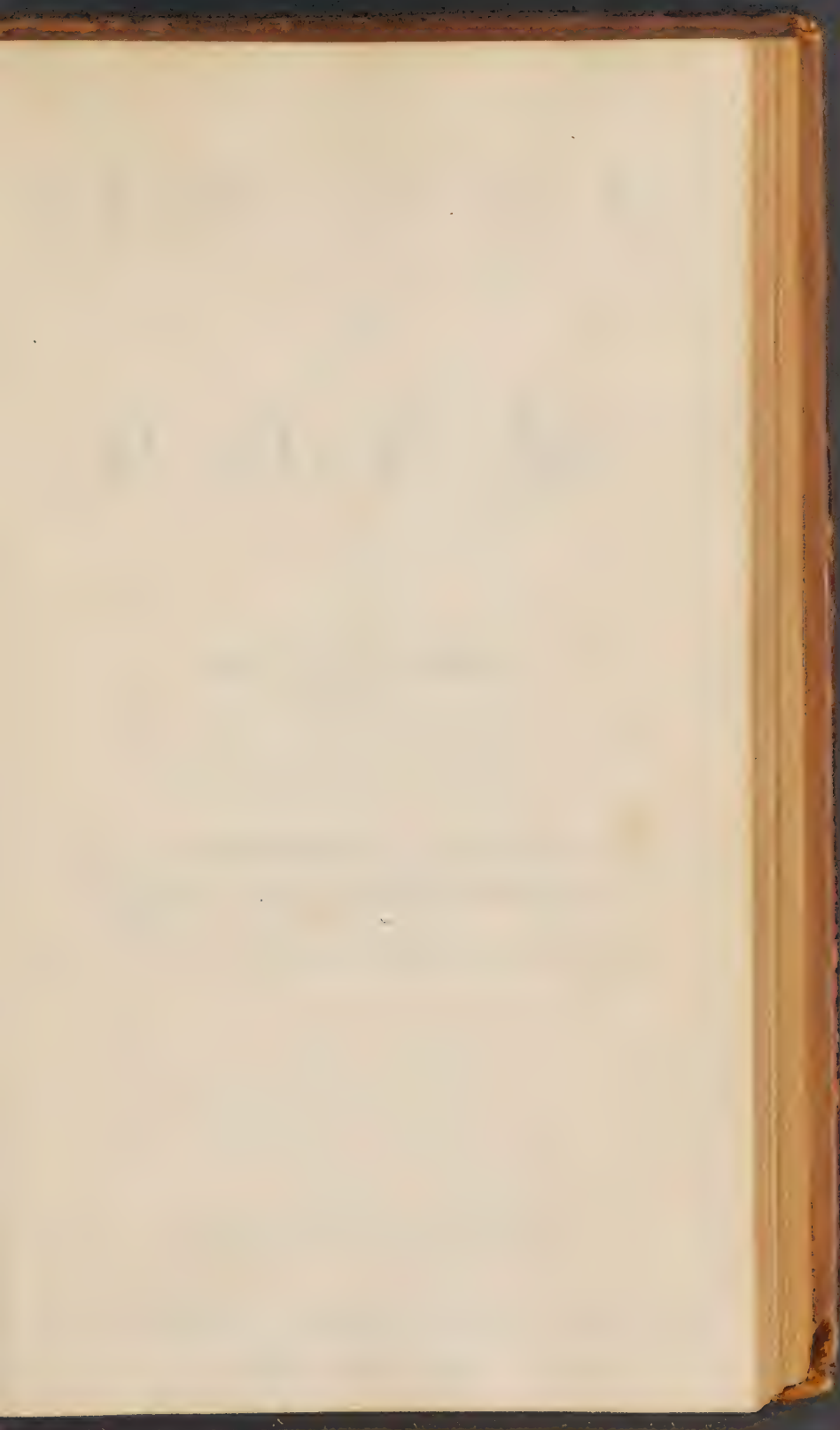
LAMDERG

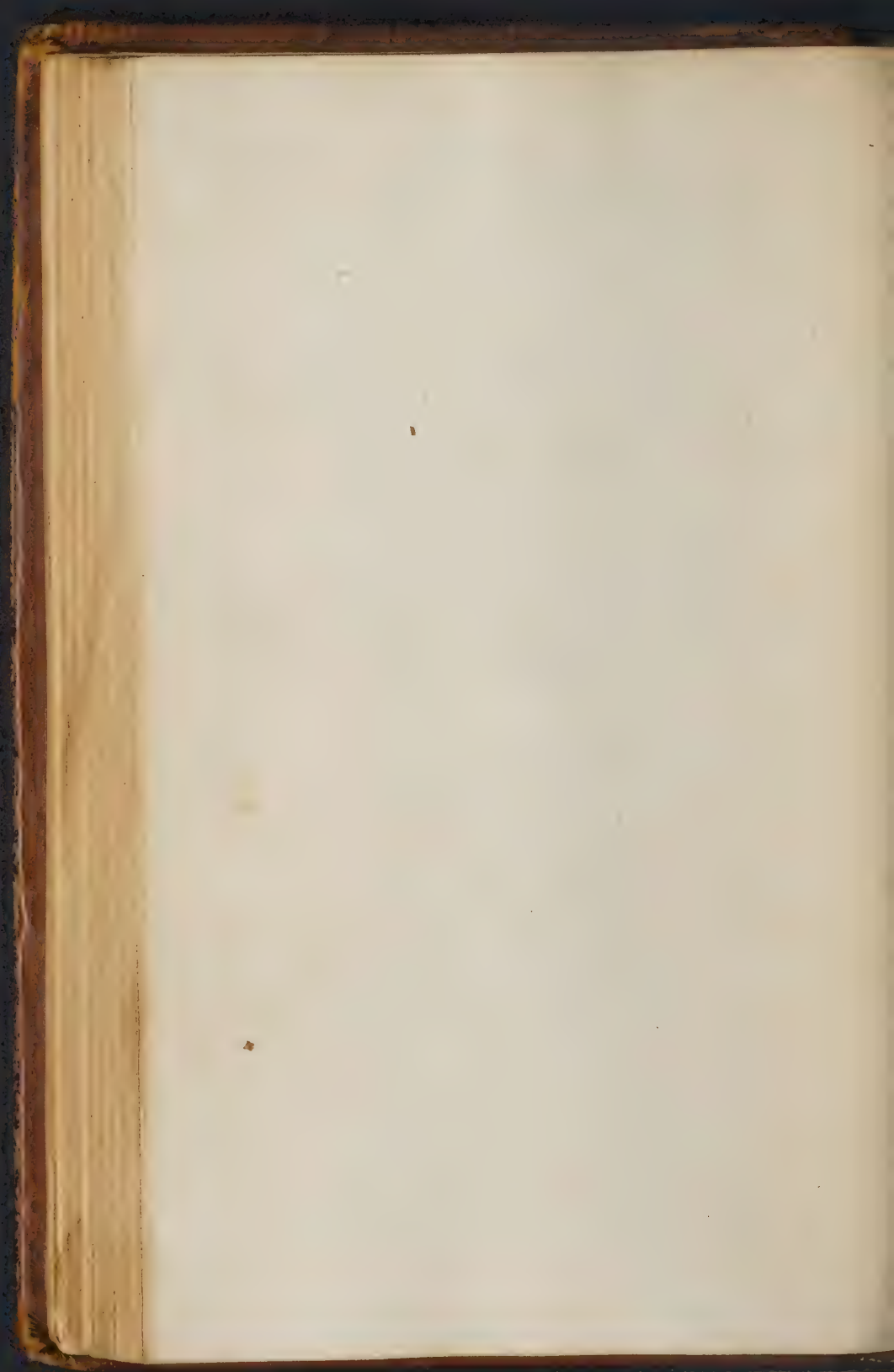
LAMDERG rushed on like a storm.
On his spear he leaped over rivers. Few
were his strides up the hill. The rocks
fly back from his heels; loud crashing
they bound to the plain. His armour,
his buckler rung. He hummed a furly
song, like the noise of the falling
stream. Dark as a cloud he stood a-
bove; his arms, like meteors, shone.
From the summit of the hill, he rolled
a rock. Ullin heard in the hall of
Carbre. —

F I N I S.









T H E
HIGHLANDER:

A
P O E M:

I N

Six CANTOS.

*By James Macpherson
Translator of Ossian Poems*

*Cætera quæ vacuas tenuissent carmina mentes,
Omnia jam vulgata.*———

VIRG.

E D I N B U R G H :

Printed by WAL. RUDDIMAN jun. and COMPANY;

M D C C L V I I I .

RICHARDSON

POEM

IN

THE
LIFE OF
THE
LORD

BY
THE
REV. J. W. RICHARDSON
OF
THE
CLERGY OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

THE
HIGHLANDER:
A
POEM.

CANTO I.

THE youth I sing, who, to himself unknown,
Lost to the world and CALEDONIA'S throne,
Sprung o'er his mountains to the arms of Fame,
And, wing'd by Fate, his sire's avenger, came;
That knowledge learn'd, so long deny'd by fate,
And found that blood, as merit, made him great.

The aged chieftain on the bier is laid,
And grac'd with all the honours of the dead;
The youthful warriors, as the corse they bear,
Droop the sad head, and shed the gen'rous tear.
For Abria's shore, Tay's winding banks they leave,
And bring the Hero to his father's grave.

A

His

4 The HIGHLANDER:

His filial tears the godlike ALPIN sheds,
And tow'rd's the foe his gallant warriors leads.
The chief along his silent journey wound,
And fix'd his rainy eyes upon the ground;
Behind advanc'd his followers sad and slow,
In all the dark solemnity of woe.

Mean time fierce SCANDINAVIA's hostile pow'r,
Its squadrons spread along the murmur'ing shore;
Prepar'd, at once, the city to invade,
And conquer CALEDONIA in her head.
His camp, for night, the royal SUEÑO forms,
Resolv'd with morn to use his Danish arms.

Now in the ocean sunk the flaming day,
And streak'd the ruddy west with setting ray;
Around great INDULPH, in the senate sat
The noble Chiefs of CALEDONIA's state.
In mental scales they either forces weigh,
And act, before, the labours of the day;
Arrange in thought their CALEDONIA's might,
And bend their little army to the fight.

Thus they consult. Brave ALPIN's martial gait,
Approach'd the portals of the dome of state;
Resolv'd to offer to his king and lord,
The gen'rous service of his trusty sword.

Th' un-

Th' unusual sight the gallant chief admires,
The bending arches and the lofty spires.
On either side the gate, in order stand
The antient Kings of CALEDONIA's land:
The marble lives, they breathe within the stone,
And still, as once, the royal warriors frown.

The FERGUS's are seen above the gate ;
This first created, that restor'd the state.
In warlike pomp, the awful forms appear,
And, bending, threaten from the stone the spear ;
While to their side young ALBION seems to rise,
And on her fathers turns her smiling eyes.

And next appears GREGORIUS' awful name,
HIBERNIA's conqu'ror for a gen'rous fame.
Incas'd in arms, the royal Hero stands,
And gives his captive all his conquer'd lands.
The filial heart of hapless ALPIN's son,
In marble melts and beats within the stone.
Revenge still sparkles in the Hero's eye ;
Around the PICTS, a nameless slaughter, lye.

The youthful warrior thus reviews, with joy,
The godlike series of his ancestry.
The godlike forms the drooping HERO cheer,
And keen ambition half believes the seer :

Eager he shoots into the spacious gate ;
His eye commands, without his followers wait.

No frowning spear-man guards the awful door ;
No borrow'd terror arms the hand of pow'r :
No cringing bands of sycophants appear,
To send false echoes to the monarch's ear.
Merit's soft voice, oppression's mournful groan,
Advanc'd, unstiff'd, to th' attentive throne.

The Hero, ent'ring, took his solemn stand
Among the gallant warriors of the land.
His manly port, the staring chiefs admire,
And half-heard whispers blow the soldier's fire.
A while his form engag'd the monarch's eyes,
At length he rais'd the music of his voice.

“ Whence is the youth ? I see fierce DENMARK
warms

Each gen'rous breast, and fires 'em into arms.
A face once known is in that youth exprest,
And mends a dying image in my breast.”

He said: And thus the Youth; “ 'midst rocks afar,
I heard of DENMARK, and of SUEÑO's war.
My country's safety in my bosom rose ;
For CALEDONIA's sons should meet her foes.

We ought not meanly wait the storm at home,
But rush afar, and break it 'ere it come:
Few are my foll'wers, but these few are true;
We come to serve our country, fame, and you!"
He said: The king retorts; "thy form, thy mind;
Declare the scion of a gen'rous kind;
With SCOTIA's foes maintain the stern debate,
And spring from valour to the arms of state.
Whoe'er would raise his house in ALBION, shou'd
Lay the foundation in her en'mies' blood."

Then to the Chiefs: "Supporters of my throne;
Your fires brought oft the Roman Eagles down.
Yourselfes, my lords, have caus'd the haughty

DANE,

To curse the land, he try'd so oft in vain:
Norwegian firs oft brought them o'er the waves,
For ALBION's crown; but ALBION gave 'em graves.
Be still the same, exert yourselfes like men,
And of th' invaders wash our rocks again.
Tho' few our numbers, these, in arms grown old,
In ALBION's and in INDULPH's cause are bold.
The brave man looks not, when the clarion sounds,
To hostile numbers, but his country's wounds;

8 The HIGHLANDER :

Bold to the last and dauntless he'll go on,
At once his country's soldier and her son."

The monarch thus his royal mind exprest ;
The patriot kindling in each gen'rous breast.
Each chieftain's mind with pleasure goes before,
Already mingling with the battle's roar.
In thought each Hero sweeps the bloody plain,
And deals, in fancy, death upon the DANE.

DUMBAR arose, the brave remains of wars,
Silver'd with years, o'er-run with honest scars ;
Great in the senate, in the field renown'd ;
The senior stood : attention hung around.

He thus : " Fierce DENMARK all the North
 commands,
And belches numbers on our neighb'ring lands,
England's subdu'd, the Saxons are o'ercome,
And meanly own a Danish lord at home.
Scarce now a blast from SCANDINAVIA roars,
But wafts a hostile squadron to our shores.
One fleet destroy'd, another crowns the waves,
The sons seem anxious for their father's graves :
Thus war returns in an eternal round,
Battles on battles press, and wound on wound.

Our

Our numbers thinn'd, our godlike warriors dead,
Pale CALEDONIA hangs her sickly head;
We must be wise, be frugal of our store,
Add art to arms, and caution to our pow'r.
Beneath the sable mantle of the night,
Rush on the foe, and, latent, urge the fight.
Conduct with few may foil this mighty pow'r,
And DENMARK shun th' inhospitable shore."

The senior spoke : a gen'ral voice approves;
To arm his kindred-bands each chief removes.
Night from the east the drousy world invades,
And clothes the warriors in her dusky shades :
The vassal-throng advance, a manly cloud,
And with their sable ranks the chieftains shroud.
Each chief, now here, now there, in armour shines,
Waves thro' the ranks, and draws the lengthen'd
lines.

Thus, on a night when rattling tempests war,
Thro' broken clouds appears a blazing star ;
Now veils its head, now rushes on the fight,
And shoots a livid horror thro' the night.

The full form'd columns, in the midnight hour,
Begin their silent journey tow'rds the shore :

Thro'

10 The HIGHLANDER

Thro' ev'ry rank the chiefs inciting roam,
And rousing whispers hiss along the gloom.

A rising hill, whose night-invelop'd brow
Hung o'er th' incamped squadrons of the foe,
Shoots to the deep its ooze immantled arm,
And, steadfast, struggles with the raging storm;
Here ends the moving host its winding road:
And here condenses, like a sable cloud,
Which long was gath'ring on the mountain's brow,
Then broke in thunder on the vales below.

Again the chiefs, in midnight council met,
Before the king maintain the calm debate:
This waits the equal contest of the day,
That rushes, headlong, to the nightly fray.

At length young ALPIN stood, and thus begun,
"Great king, supporter of our antient throne!
Brought up in mountains, and from councils far,
I am a novice in the art of war;
Yet hear this thought.---Within the womb of night,
Confirm the troops, and arm the youth for fight;
While softly-treading to yon' camp I go,
And mark the disposition of the foe:
Or, wakeful, arm they for the dismal fight;
Or, wrapt within the lethargy of night,

Are left abandon'd to our SCOTTISH sword,
By sleep's soft hand, in fatal chains secur'd.
If DENMARK sleeps in night's infolding arms,
Expect your spy to point out latent storms;
But, they in arms, too long delay'd my speed,
Then place the faithful scout among the dead."

A gen'ral voice th' exploring thought approves,
And ev'ry wish with youthful ALPIN moves.

The Hero slides along the gloom of night,
The camp-fires send afar their gleaming light;
Athwart his side the trusty fabre flies,
The various plaid hangs, plaited, down his thighs:
The crested helm waves, awful, on his head;
His manly trunk the mail and corslet shade:
The pond'rous spear supports his dusky way;
The waving steel reflects the stellar way.

Arriv'd, the dauntless youth solemnly slow,
Observant, mov'd along the silent foe.
Some 'brac'd in arms the midnight vigil keep,
Some o'er the livid camp-fires nod to sleep:
The feeding courser to the stake is bound,
The prostrate horseman stretch'd along the ground:
Extended here the brawny footman lay,
And, dosing, wore the lazy night away.

The

12 The HIGHLANDER:

The watchman there, by sleep's soft hand o'er-
power'd,

Starts at the blast, and half unsheaths his sword:
Th' exploring youth, thro' night's involving cloud,
Circling the foe, their disposition view'd.
At length the Hero's dusky journey ends,
Where HACO feasted with his Danish friends;
HACO, by more than SUENO's blood, was great;
The promis'd monarch of the triple state.
The Scandinavian camp the youth secur'd
With watchful troops, and not unfaithful sword.

Two oaks, from earth by headlong tempests torn,
Supply the fire, and in the circle burn;
Around with social talk the feast they share,
And drown in bowls the CALEDONIAN war:
O'erpower'd, at length, by slumber's silken hand,
They press the beach, and cower upon the strand.

A gallant deed the Mountain-youth design'd,
And nurs'd a growing action in his mind.
Awful the chief advanc'd: his armour bright
Reflects the fire and shines along the night.
Hov'ring he stood above the sleeping band,
And shone, an awful column, o'er the strand.

Thus,

Thus, often to the midnight traveller,
The stalking figures of the dead appear :
Silent the spectre tow'rs before the sight,
And shines, an awful image, thro' the night.
At length the giant phantom hovers o'er
Some grave unhallow'd, stain'd with murder'd gore.

Thus ALPIN stood : He exiles to the dead
Six warrior-youths ; the trembling remnant fled ;
Young HACO starts, unsheaths his shining sword,
And views his friends in iron-chains secur'd.
He rushes, headlong, on the daring foe ;
The godlike ALPIN renders blow for blow.
Their clatt'ring swords on either armour fell ;
Fire flashes round, as steel contends with steel.
Young ALPIN's sword on HACO's helmet broke,
And to the ground the stagg'ring warrior took.
Leaning on his broad shield the hero bends ;
ALPIN, aloft in air, his sword suspends :
His arm up-rais'd, he downward bends his brow,
But scorn'd to take advantage of the foe.

Young HACO from his hand the weapon threw,
And from his flaming breast these accents drew.
" Bravest of men ! who cou'd thro' night come on,
Who durst attack, and foil an host alone.

14 The HIGHLANDER:

I see the man high on the warrior plac'd,
Both mend each other in your noble breast.
Accept, brave man, the friendship of a Dane,
Who hates the Scot, but yet can love the man."
He said: while thus the Scot; "with joy, I find
The man so pow'rful in an en'my's mind;
Your forces fled, amidst night's dark alarms,
You both cou'd stand, and use your gallant arms:
Such valiant deeds thy dauntless soul confess,
That I the warrior, tho' the Dane, embrace."

His brawny arms he round the Hero flung;
As they embrace the clashing corslets rung.

The Dane resumes: "With the sun's rising beam,
We may, in fields of death, contend for fame;
Receive this shield, that, midst to-morrow's storms,
HACO may, grateful, shun his well-known arms."

He said, and gave the gold-enamel'd round;
While, as he reach'd, the studded thongs resound.
The amicable colloquy they end,
And each a foe, clasp'd in his arms a friend.
This to the camp his dusky journey bends;
While that to ALBION's chiefs the hill ascends.

Th' exploring journey, all, with pleasure, hear,
And own the valiant scout their noble care.

Diffolv'd

Dissolv'd the council, the attack declin'd,
 Each with the gift of sleep indulg'd his mind;
 And 'midst his kindred-bands, supinely laid,
 Each softly slumber'd on a mossy bed.

His mind to soft repose young ALPIN bends,
 And seeks the humble circle of his friends:
 Reclining on a rock the Hero lies,
 And gradual slumbers steal upon his eyes.
 Still to his mind the DANISH camp arose,
 Hung on his dreams, and hagg'd his calm repose;
 Once more he mix'd with HACO in the fight
 And urg'd, impending, on the DANISH flight.

End of Canto first.

C A N T O II.

HEav'n's op'ning portals shot the beam of day;
Earth chang'd her sable robe to sprightly
grey :

To West's dark goal the humid night is fled,
The sun, o'er ocean, rears his beamy head :
The splendid gleam from Scottish steel returns,
And all the light reflexive mountains burns.

Deep-sounding bag-pipes, gaining on the air,
With lofty voice awake the Scottish war.
The gallant chiefs, along the mountain's brow,
Stand 'cass'd in arms, and low'r upon the foe ;
Or, awful, thro' the forming squadrons shine,
Build up the ranks, and stretch the lengthen'd line.

Each Clan their standards from the beam unbind,
They float along, and clap upon the wind ;
The hieroglyphic honours of the brave,
Acquire a double horror as they wave.

The Southern warriors stretch the lines of war
Full on the right, obedient to Dumbar.
Harden'd to manhood in the school of arms,
He moves along sedately as he forms :

Next

Next deeply stretch their regular array,
To break the iron tempest of the day,
The sons of LENNOX; and their gallant Grahame,
Oft honour'd with the bloody spoils of fame.
He tow'rs along with unaffected pride,
Whilst they display their blazing arms aside.

Great SOMERLED possess the middle space,
And rang'd the kindred valour of his race;
The dauntless sons of MORCHUAN's rocky soil,
And the rough manhood of MULL's sea-girt isle.

The Mountain-chiefs, in burning arms incas'd,
And carrying all their country in their breast,
Undaunted rear their useful arms on high;
Now fought for food, and now for liberty:
Now met the sport of hills, now of the main,
Here pierc'd a stag, and there transfix'd a DANE.
Tho' nature's walls their homely huts inclose,
To guard their homely huts tho' mountains rose;
Yet feeling ALBION in their breasts, they dare
From rocks to rush and meet the distant war.

The full-form'd lines now crown the mountain's
brow,
And wave a blazing forest o'er the foe.

18 The HIGHLANDER:

The King commands ; down, in array, they creep,
 Their clanking arms beat time to ev'ry step;
 As they descend they stretch along the strand,
 Restore the ranks, and make a solemn stand.

Before the camp the Danish columns rise,
 And stretch the battle to the clarion's voice.
 Majestic Sveno kept the higher place,
 Great in the war, as in his noble race ;
 And, when the sword to milder peace shall yield,
 In council great, as in the thund'ring field.

Behind their King, to either hand afar,
 Rough NORWAY's sons extend the front of war.
 He moves, incas'd in steel and majesty,
 Along the ranks, and plans them with his eye:
 Speaks his commands with unaffected ease,
 And, unconcern'd, the coming battle sees ;
 Bent on his purpose, obstinately brave,
 To win a kingdom or an honest grave ;
 He seem'd to look tow'rs Norway's rocky shore,
 And say,----I'll conquer, or return no more.

Far to the right fierce MAGNUS' fiery sway
 Compels the troops, and rears the quick array :
 Haughty, he moves, and catching flame from far,
 Looks tow'rs the Scots, anticipates the war ;

Feels

Feels cruel joys in all his fibres rise,
And gathers all his fury to his eyes.

Young Haco, on the left, the battle rears,
And moves majestic thro' a wood of spears;
With martial skill the rising ranks he forms,
No novice in the iron-trade of arms.
Thus form'd, the DANES, in unconfus'd array,
Stretch their long lines along the murm'ring sea.
Their anchor'd ships, a sable wood, behind,
Nod on the wave and whistle to the wind.

On either side, thus stretch'd the manly line,
With darting gleam the steel-clad ridges shine:
On either side the gloomy lines incede,
Foot rose with foot, and head advanc'd with head.
Thus when two winds descend upon the main,
To fight their battles on the wat'ry plain;
In two black lines the equal waters croud,
On either side the white-top'd ridges nod.
At length they break, and raise a bubbling sound,
While echo rumbles from the rocks around.

Thus march the DANES with spreading wings
afar,

Thus moves the horror of the Scottish war;

20 The H I G H L A N D E R :

While drowsy silence droops her mournful head,
Whose calm repose the clanking arms invade.

The Mountain-youth with unaffected pride,
Twice thirty warriors rising by his side,
His native band, precedes the Scottish forms,
A shining column in the day of arms.
In act to throw, he holds the pond'rous spear,
And views, with awful smiles, the face of war.
Nodding along, his polish'd helmet shines,
And looks, superior, o'er the subject lines.

On either side, devour'd the narrow ground
The moving troops.---The hostile ridges frown'd.
From either host the HERALD's awful breath
Rung, in the trumpet's throat, the peal of death.
The martial sound foment's their kindling rage ;
Onward they rush, and in a shout engage.
The swords thro' air their gleaming journeys fly,
Crash on the helms and tremble in the sky.
Groan follows groan, and wound succeeds on wound,
While dying bodies quiver on the ground.

Thus when devouring hatchet-men invade,
With sounding steel, the forest's leavy head,
The mountains ring with their repeated strokes ;
The tap'ring firs, the elms, the aged oaks,

Quake

Quake at each gash; then nod the head and yield;
Groan as they fall, and tremble on the field.
Thus fell the men; blood forms a lake around,
While groans and spears hoarse harmony resound.
The mountains hear, and thunder back the noise,
And echo flammers with unequal voice.

As yet the battle hung in doubtful scales;
Each bravely fought, in death or only fails.
All, all are bent on death or victory,
Resolv'd to conquer, or with glory die.
Fierce DENMARK's honour kindles fire in these;
On these pale ALBION bends her parent-eyes.
This sternly says, "shall DENMARK's children fly?"
But that, "or save, or with your country die."
The SCOTS, a Stream, wou'd sweep the DANES away,
The DANES, a Rock, repell'd the SCOTS array.
They fight alternate, and alternate fly,
Both wound, both conquer, both with glory die.

Thrice HACO strove to break DUMBAR's array,
And thrice DUMBAR impell'd him to the sea.
The fiery MAGNUS, foaming on the right,
Pours on the Mountain-chiefs his warrior-might.
The Mountain-youths the furious chief restrain,
And turn the battle back upon the DANE.

The

22 The HIGHLANDER:

The ranks of SUEÑO stand in firm array,
As hoary rocks repel the raging sea.
The HERO to the phalanx crouds his might,
And calmly manages the standing fight;
Not idly madd'ning in the bloody fray,
He wears delib'rately the foe away.

Straight on his spear the godlike ALPIN stood,
His flaming armour 'smeared with Danish blood:
He casts behind an awe-commanding look,
And to his few, but valiant, followers spoke.
"The cautious DANES, O friends, in firm array,
With perseverance may secure the day;
Our people fall.----Let us their force divide;
Invade with flame their transports on the tide.
They will defend, the Scots restore the day;
Follow, my friends, your ALPIN leads the way."
He said, and rush'd upon the phalanx'd DANE,
The bending ranks beneath his sword complain.
Arms, groans of men, beat time to ev'ry wound,
Nod at each blow, and thunder on the ground.
Behind his friends advance with martial care,
Move step for step, and spread the lane of war.
He low'rs before, and clears the rugged road;
They rush behind, a rough and headlong flood.

Thus

Thus on some eminence, the lab'ring swain
Unlocks his sluice to drench the thirsty plain:
With mattock arm'd he shapes the water's course,
The liquid flows behind, with rapid force.

Thus valiant ALPIN hews his bloody way,
And thus his friends force thro' their firm array;
With great effort he seizes on the strand,
Turns to his friends, and issues his command.

“Thicken your lines, the battle's shock sustain,
And gall with vigour the recoiling DANE.

Brave CALEDONIANS! face your country's foe;
Your lives are hers, her own on her bestow.”

He added not.---The valiant youths obey:

The HERO shap'd along his rapid way;
Rush'd to the camp, and seiz'd a flaming brand,
Then took his lofty seat upon the strand.

Swift, from his arm, the crackling ember flies,
Whizzes along, and kindles in the skies:

The pitchy hull receives the sparkling fire;
The kindling ship the fanning winds inspire.

Black smoke ascends: at length the flames arise,
His thro' the shrouds, and crackle in the skies.

The riding fleet is all in darkness lost,
Its canvas wings the flame spreads on the blast.

24 The HIGHLANDER:

Red embers, falling from the burning shroud,
Hiss in the wave, and bubble in the flood.

Great SUENO turns, and sees the flame behind,
Swell its huge columns on the driving wind;
Then thus to ERIC ---- "Urge your speedy flight,
Recal the fiery MAGNUS from the right:
Quick let him come! th' endanger'd transports save,
And dash against the burning ship the wave.

The youth obeys, and, flying o'er the sand,
Repeats in MAGNUS' ear the king's command.
The warrior starts, rage sparkling in his eyes,
He tow'rs along resounding as he flies:
He comes,---From SUENO's army squadrons fall
Around the chief, and rear the manly wall;
Till in their front the stately chief appears,
They wave, behind, an iron wood of spears;
In all the gloomy pomp of battle low'r,
And beat with sounding steps the fatal shore.

Bent to support the flame, his thin array
Young ALPIN draws along the murm'ring sea.
He holds the massy spear in act to throw,
And bends his fiery eyes upon the foe.
Advanc'd,----with awful din the fight began;
Steel speaks on steel; man urges upon man.

Groans

Groans, shouts, arms, men, a jarring discord sound,
Gain on the sky and shake the mountains round.

Fierce MAGNUS, here, wou'd rush into the main:
Young ALPIN, there, wou'd keep at bay the DANE.
One pushes the swift boat into the sea ;
Thro' his bent back the faulchion cleaves its way :
Another dashes to the ship the wave,
And bends at once into a wat'ry grave ;
Spouts with departing breath the bubbling flood,
And dyes the water with his foaming blood.

Thus fought the men.----Behind the flame re-
sounds,
Gains on the fleet, and spreads its wasteful bounds.
Great MAGNUS, burning at the dismal sight,
Advanc'd with rage redoubled to the fight.
“ Degen'rate DANES”----The raging warrior cries,
“ The day is lost---Your fame, your honour dies!
Advance,----condense your ranks,----bear on your
way,

And sweep these daring striplings to the sea.”
The men advance.----proceeds their haughty lord,
And wounds the air with his impatient sword.
Bending, where ALPIN reapt the bloody plain,
“ Turn, here's a man, turn, stripling, here's a DANE!”

He

26 The HIGHLANDER :

He said.---The Mountain-warrior turns his eyes,
Then sternly wheels, and with a blow replies.
Great MAGNUS falling on young ALPIN's shield,
Adds to the dismal thunder of the field.
Revengful ALPIN, with descending blade,
Crashes the shining thunder on his head.
They aim, defend ; their swords, at every stroke,
Talk on the way, and gleam along the smoke.

At length on MAGNUS Fate deals home a wound ;
He nods to death, and thunders on the ground.
Starting from the wide wound the bubbling blood,
Sinks thro' the sand, and rolls a smoking flood.
Prone on the strand, extended ev'ry way,
Clad o'er with steel, a shining trunk he lay.
Thus, on its lofty seat, shou'd winds invade
The statue keeps the mem'ry of the dead ;
It quakes at ev'ry blast, and nods around,
Then falls, a shapeless ruin, to the ground.

The DANES beholding their commander die,
Start from their ranks, and in confusion fly.
The youth pursues : the flames behind him roar
Catch all the fleet, and clothe with smoke the shore.
Mean time great SUENO, DENMARK's valiant King,
Round royal INDULPH bends the hostile ring.

Hemm'd

Hemm'd in a circle of invading men,
They face on ev'ry side the closing DANE;
Deal blow for blow, and wound return for wound,
And bring the stagg'ring en'my to the ground.
GREAT SOMERLED, ARGYLE's majestic lord,
Thro' HARALD's sounding helmet drives his sword:
Stagg'ring he falls, his rattling arms resound,
And in the pangs of death he bites the ground.

Thro' HILRIC's shield great INDULPH urg'd the
spear,

It pierc'd his breast, and smok'd behind in air:
Groaning he sinks; as when repeated strokes
Bring headlong to the ground the slaughter'd ox.

Brave GRAHAME thro' mighty CANUTE urg'd the
spear,

Where, 'twixt the helm and mail, the neck was bare.
Press'd with the helm his pond'rous head inclin'd;
He nodding falls, as trees o'erturn'd by wind.

While thus the en'my's front the chieftains wore,
And pil'd with hostile trunks the fatal shore;
By slow degrees their force declines away,
Surrounding DENMARK gains upon the day.
Great INDULPH stood amidst the warrior-ring;
All give attention to their valiant king.

28 The HIGHLANDER:

“Hear me, ye chiefs,” the mournful monarch cries,
“We fall to day, our state, our country dies.

Let us acquit ourselves of ALBION’s death,
And yield in her defence our latest breath.”

He said: and rush’d from the surrounding ring,
And ’midst the battle fought the DANISH king.

Ready to fight the royal warriors stood,
And long’d to revel in each others blood;

While ALPIN rushing from the flaming shore,
With wasteful path, pursu’d the flying pow’r;

Hew’d thro’ great SUEÑO’s ring his bloody way,
And to the desp’rate chieftains gave the day;

Rush’d ’twixt great INDULPH and bold SUEÑO’s sword,
And with his royal life preserv’d his lord.

Brave SUEÑO nods, falls to the strand, and cries;
“O honour! DENMARK lost, undone!”----and dies.

But still fierce DENMARK made a broken stand;
Here stands a squadron, there a gloomy band,
Rears a firm column on the smoky shore,
Makes the last efforts of a dying pow’r.

Thus, after fire thro’ lanes its way has took,
A prostrate village lies o’erwhelm’d in smoke;
But here and there some sable turrets stand,
And look, a dismal ruin, o’er the land.

So stood the DANES; but, soon o'erpower'd, they fly,
Stumble along, and in their flight they die.

NORVEGIA's sons, of MAGNUS' fire bereft,
Fell down before the chieftains of the left.
The great DUMBAR upon the right repell'd
Young HACO's force, and swept him off the field:
He winds his hasty march along the coast,
Fights as he flies, and shields his little host.
At length, within a wood o'er shades the sea,
With new fell'd oaks he walls his thin array;
Bent on his fate, and obstinately brave,
There mark'd at once his battle-field and grave.

End of Canto second.

C A N T O III.

AS when, beneath the night's tempestuous cloud,
Embattl'd winds assail the leafy wood;
Tear on their sable way with awful sound;
And bring the groaning forest to the ground:
The trunks of elms, the shrub, the fir, the oak,
In one confusion sink beneath the shock.
So death's sad spoils the bloody field bestrow'd;
The haughty chieftain, the ignoble croud,
The coward, brave, partake the common wound,
Are friends in death, and mingle on the ground.

Dark night approach'd. --- the flaming lord of day
Had plung'd his glowing circle in the sea.
On the blue sky the gath'ring clouds arise,
And tempests clap their wings along the skies.
The murm'ring voice of heav'n, at distance, fails,
And eddy'ing whirl-winds howl along the vales.
The sky inwrapt in awful darkness low'rs,
And threatens to descend, at once, in show'rs.

The CALEDONIAN chiefs, to shun the storm,
Beneath a leafy oak their council form.
An antient trunk supports the weary king;
The nobles bend around the standing ring.

With

With swords unsheath'd the awful forms appear'd,
Their shining arms with DANISH blood besmear'd :
Their eyes shoot fire ; their meins unsettled shew,
The battle frowns as yet upon their brow.
The monarch rose, and leaning on the oak,
Stretch'd out his hand, and to the nobles spoke.
“ My lords ! the DANES, for so just heav'n decreed,
Ev'n on that shore they thought to conquer, bleed.
In vain Death wrapt our fathers in his gloom,
We raise them, in our actions, from the tomb.
Not infamous their aim, o'er lands afar :
To spread destruction and the plague of war ;
To meet the sons of battle as they roam,
Content to ward them from their native home ;
To shew invaders that they dar'd to die,
For barren rocks, for fame and liberty.
In you they live, fall'n DENMARK's host may shew ;
Accept my thanks ; your country thanks you too.”

He added not : but turn'd his eyes around,
Till in the ring the valiant youth he found.
“ Approach, brave youth !” the smiling monarch
cry'd,
“ Your country's soldier, and your country's pride,

32 The HIGHLANDER:

SCOTLAND shall thank thee for this gallant strife,
While grateful INDULPH owes to thee his life."

Thus he, advancing, --- and with ardour prest
The gallant warrior to his royal breast.
The unpretentious ALPIN bends his eyes,
And mix'd with blushes to the king replies.

"To save our king, our country's antient throne,
Are debts incumbent on her ev'ry son;
O monarch! add it not to ALPIN's praise,
That, of this gen'ral debt, his part he pays."
Thus said the youth, and modestly retir'd,
While, as he moves, the king and chiefs admir'd:
Slow to his stand his easy steps he bears,
And hears his praises with unwilling ears.

The king resumes.---"O chiefs, O valiant peers!
Glad CALEDONIA dries her running tears:
The warrior rais'd his faulchion o'er her head.
Now sleeps, forgotten, on an earthen bed.
Fierce SCANDINAVIA's fatal storms are o'er,
Her thunder-bolts lie harmless on the shore.
But as when, after night, has beat a storm,
On the mild morn some spots the sky deform;
The broken clouds from ev'ry quarter sail,
Join their black troops, and all the heav'ns veil;

The

The winds arise, descends the fluicy rain,
The storm, with force redoubl'd, beats the plain :
So, when the youthful Haco shall afar
Collect the broken fragments of the war,
The Hero, arm'd with SUEÑO's death, may come
And claim an expiation on his tomb ;
Deep in that wood the gallant warrior lies
Who shall, to night, his little camp surprize ;
Surround the martial DANE with nightly care,
And give the final stroke to dying war :
Hence NORWAY's ships shall shun our fatal sea,
And point the crooked beak another way ;
If chance they spy where oft their armies fell,
Shall turn the prow, and croud away the sail."

He said no more : the gen'rous chiefs arise,
Bent on the glory of the enterprize.
Eager to climb thro' dang'rous paths to fame,
The nightly war they severally claim.
One chief observ'd where godlike Haco lay ;
This knew the wood ; --- and that, the dusky way :
Another urg'd his more unwearied friends ;
And ev'ry chieftain something recommends.

Thus for the arduous task the chiefs contest,
While each wou'd grasp the danger to his breast.

Th'

Th' attentive monarch heard their brave debates,
And, with a secret joy, his soul dilates.

Young ALPIN burns to urge the war of night,
To mix again with HACO in the fight.
Eager he stood, and thus the chiefs adrest,
The warrior lab'ring in his manly breast;
" King, gallant chiefs !---this enterprize I claim ;
Here let me fix my unestablish'd fame.
Already you have beat her arduous path,
Reapt glorious harvests in the fields of death :
Repeated feats fix'd fame within your pow'r,
But I gleam once, then sink, and am no more.
Nor am I wholly ign'rant of the fight,
I've urg'd the gloomy battles of the night :
Æbudæ's chief once touch'd on ABRIA's strand,
And swept our mountains with his pilf'ring band ;
All day they drove our cattle to the sea,
I went at midnight and rescu'd the prey ;
With a poor handful, and a faithful sword,
Dispers'd the robbers and their haughty lord.
'Twas I commanded --- these the gallant men !
May we not act that mid-night o'er again ?"

The Hero spoke ; a murm'ring voice ensu'd
Of loud applause.---each Hero's mind subdued,

The

The glorious danger to the youth resigns:
 He tow'rs along, and marshals up his lines.
 Some, gallant youths, to share his fame, arise,
 And mingle in the glorious enterprize.

The warrior-band move on in firm array,
 He tow'rs before along the sounding sea.
 Thro' their tall spears the finging tempest raves,
 And, falling headlong on the spumy waves,
 Pursues the ridgy sea with awful roar,
 And throws the liquid mountains on the shore.
 In each short pause, before the billow breaks,
 The clanking CALEDONIAN armour speaks.

Thus on some night when sable tempests roar,
 The watchman wearying of his lonely hour,
 Hears some rent branch to squeak 'twixt ev'ry
 blast,

But in each ruder gust the creak is lost.

The king and gallant chiefs, with wishful eyes,
 Pursue the youthful warrior as he flies.

His praise thro' all the noble circle ran----

Approach'd the ghastly figure of a man:

His visage pale; his locks are bleach'd with years;

His tott'ring steps he onward scarcely bears:

His

His limbs are lac'd with blood, a hideous sight!
 And his wet garments shed the tears of night.
 With slow approach he lifts his fading eyes,
 And rais'd the squeaking treble of his voice.
 "O king! I feel the leaden hand of death,
 To the dark tomb I tread the gen'ral path:
 Hear me, O king! for this I left the field,
 For this to thee my dying form reveal'd:
 NORWAY in vain had interpos'd her flood,
 I come, alas! to pay the debt of blood.
 Possess of crimes, which the good king pursu'd,
 In fell conspiracy, unblest! I vow'd
 With fierce DOVALUS; that I live to tell!
 By us, by us, the great king MALCOLM fell!
 Touch'd with remorse, behind my shield I laid
 His smiling child, and wrapt him in my plaid.
 Now to the sea we urge our rapid flight,
 Beneath the guilty mantle of the night.
 Still in my arms I little DUFFUS bear;
 Behind the voice of men, and arms we hear.
 My comrades fly,---I lay the infant down,
 And with my guilty life from vengeance run:
 They found him, sav'd him; for I knew the voice:
 It was-----he said, and clos'd at once his eyes;

Slowly

Slowly inclin'd, and, tumbling headlong down,
His guilty life breath'd in a feeble groan."

The mournful monarch stood in dumb surprise;
The fate of MALCOLM fill'd afresh his eyes.
He folds his arms, and bends his silent look,
Then, starting from the gloom of sorrow, spoke.
" You see, my lords, tho' DENMARK's hostile state
Long sav'd the traitors from the hand of fate ;
Yet heav'n, who rules with equal sway beneath,
Snatch'd from her arms a victim due to death ;
DOVALUS shall not sink among the dead,
But with that vengeance hangs o'er treason's head.
Still, MALCOLM, still, thou gen'rous, and thou best !
Thy fate hangs heavy on a brother's breast ;
You left a young, you left a helpless son,
But lost to me, to SCOTLAND, and his throne.
Perhaps, oppress'd with hunger and with cold,
He 'tends some peasant's cattle to the fold ;
Or fights a common-soldier on the field,
And bows beneath the scepter he should wield."
No more he said; the noble circle sigh'd,
They droop the silent head, nor aught reply'd.

Now dy'd apace the occidental light ;
The subject world receives the flood of night.

The

The king from ev'ry side his troops recalls;
They fall around and rear their manly walls.
He issues to return the great command,
They move along, and leave the fatal strand.
The city gain'd, each soldier's weary breast
Forgets the day, and sooths his toil with rest.

The king receives, with hospitable care,
The gallant chiefs, and drowns in wine the war.
Within the royal hall the nobles sat;
The royal hall, in simple nature great.
No pigmy art, with little mimickry,
Distracts the sense, or pains the weary eye:
Shields, spears and helms in beauteous order shone,
Along the walls of uncemented stone.
Here all the noble warriors crown the bowl,
And with the gen'rous nectar warm the soul;
With social talk steal lazy time away,
Recounting all the dangers of the day:
They turn to ALPIN, and the gloomy fight,
And tost the gallant warrior of the night.

Mean time young ALPIN 'girts the fatal wood,
And longs to mix again with DANISH blood.
Already HACO had, with martial care,
With walls of oak embrac'd an ample square:

Himself

Himself beneath a tree, the storm defends,
And keeps in arms, around, his watchful friends.

The fair Aurelia by the hero's side,
An awful warrior, and a blooming bride,
Who plac'd in martial deeds her virgin-care,
Wields in her snowy hand the ashen spear.
A silver mail hung round her slender waist,
The corslet rises on her heaving breast.
On her white arm the brazen buckler shows,
The shining helm embrac'd her marble brows;
Her twining ringlets, flowing down behind,
Sung grateful music to the nightly wind.

Fate was unkind ; just as the lovers wed,
Nor yet had tasted of the nuptial bed ;
Great SUEÑO'S trumpet call'd the youth to war,
He sigh'd, embrac'd, and left the weeping fair.
With love embolden'd, up the virgin rose,
From her soft breast the native woman throws ;
And with the gallant warrior clothes the wife,
Following her Hæo to the bloody strife.

She sought her love thro' war's destructive path,
And often turn'd from him the hand of death.
The chief, attentive, all the youth survey'd,
And in the warrior found the lovely maid.

40 The HIGHLANDER :

She leans, inclining, on her martial spear,
And only for the youth employs her fear.

The valiant SCOT assails the oaken wall :
The bulwark groans, the brave defenders fall.
With sounding steel the firm barrier he ply'd,
And pour'd his warriors in on ev'ry side.
The godlike HACO rushing thro' the night,
Now here, now there oppos'd th' invaders might;
To ev'ry corner gave divided aid,
Still, still supported by the martial maid.

Thus when the ocean, swelling o'er the strand,
Invades with billowy troops the subject land;
The sed'lous swains the earthen weight oppose,
And fill the fissures where the tempest flows.
So valiant HACO flew to ev'ry side,
And stemm'd with pointed steel the manly tide ;
With great effort preserv'd the narrow field,
And 'twixt the fair and danger kept the shield.
She, only she, employs the Hero's care ;
HACO forgot, he only thinks on her.
He longs to sink with glory to the dead,
But can he leave in grief the captive maid ?
Her dying image hags his fancy's eyes,
What shou'd he do, if fair AURELIA dies?

Love, mighty love, arrested all his pow'r ;
He wish'd for flight who never fled before.

But as the lioness, to save her young,
Despises death, and meets the hunter-throng ;
So, starting from the fable maze of care,
He faces death, and shields the lovely fair:
The martial maid with equal love possess'd
Wou'd dart 'twixt danger and her Haco's breast ;
Oppose her buckler to the lifted spear,
And turn from him the iron hand of war.

Now godlike ALPIN hew'd his bloody path
Thro' DANISH ranks, and mark'd his steps with
death.

Th' inclosed square with desp'rate hand he shears,
And reaps a bloody field of men and spears.
Groans, crashing steel, and clangour of the fight,
Increase the stormy chorus of the night.

The DANES, diminish'd, meet th' unequal war,
Where two fall'n oaks confine an inner square:
Join their broad shields, the close-wedg'd column
rear,

And on the SCOTTISH battle turn the spear.
On ev'ry side the CALEDONIANS close,
Hemming the desp'rate phalanx of the foes,

42 The H I G H L A N D E R :

To give the final stroke to battle, croud :
 While HACO thus bespoke the DANES aloud ;
 “ Ye sons of North, unfortunate, tho’ brave !
 Here fate has marked out our common grave ;
 Has doom’d our bodies to enrich these plains:
 Then die reveng’d----like warriors and like DANES!”

He spoke, and turning to the martial maid,
 Embrac’d her softly, and thus, sighing, said;
 “ Shall then my spouse, my love, my only joy,
 Shall fair AURELIA with her HACO die !
 Thy death afflicts me.----I in vain complain ;
 I’ll save AURELIA, or expire----a DANE !”
 He said, and gath’ring up his spacious shield
 Prepar’d to meet the battle in the field.

Young ALPIN heard.----It touch’d his feeling
 breast,

He stopt the war, and thus the DANE address’d
 “ Our CALEDONIA, now reliev’d of fear,
 Feels pity rising in the place of care ;
 Disdains to tyrannize o’er vanquish’d foes,
 And for her steel on them her pity throws.
 I now dismiss brave HACO from the field,
 And own the gen’rous present of the shield.”

He

He said : ---- his thanks returns the royal DANE,
Himself escorts them to the sounding main.

A ship escap'd the flame, within a bay,
Where bending rocks exclude the rougher sea,
Secure from stormy winds in safety rides,
And slowly nods on the recoiling tides;
Thither they bend, and launching to the sea,
Plow with the crooked beak the wat'ry way ;
Their fable journey to the North explore,
And leave their sleeping friends upon the shore.

End of Canto third.

C A N T O IV.

THE sprightly morn with early blushes spread,
Rears o'er the eastern hills her rosy head;

The storm subsides, the breezes as they pass.

Sigh on their way along the pearly grass.

Sweet carol all the songsters of the spray,

Calm and serene comes on the gentle day,

Amidst attendant fair CULENA moves,

CULENA, fruit of INDULPH'S nuptial loves!

Too soon to fate the beauteous queen resign'd,

But left the image of herself behind.

To the calm main the lovely nymphs repair,

To breathe along the strand the morning air;

They brush with easy steps the dewy grass.

Observing beauteous nature as they pass.

Th' imperial maid moves with superior grace,

Awe mix'd with mildness sat upon her face;

High inbred virtue all her bosom warms,

In beauty rises, and improves her charms.

Silent and slow she moves along the main,

Behind, her maids attend, a modest train!

Observe her as she moves with native state,

And gather all their motions from her gait.

Thus

Thus thro' IDALIA's balm-distilling grove,
Majestic moves the smiling Queen of Love :
Her hair flows down her snowy neck behind,
Her purple mantle floats upon the wind ;
The Graces move along, a blooming train !
And borrow all the gestures of their queen.

Thus steal the lovely maids their tardy way
Along the silent border of the sea.
Slow-curling waves advance upon the main,
And often threat the shore, and oft abstain.
A woody mound, which rear'd aloft its head,
Threw trembling shadows o'er a narrow mead :
From a black rock crystalline waters leap,
Arch as they fall, and thro' the valley creep,
Chide with the murm'ring pebbles as they pass,
Or hum their purling journey thro' the grass.

Pleas'd with the scene the wand'ring virgins stood ;
The main below, above the lofty wood.
Their eyes they fate with the transporting scene,
And, sitting, press the fair-enamel'd green ;
Enjoy with innocence the growing day,
And steal with harmless talk the time away.

Mean time fierce CORBRED, who prefer'd in vain
His suit to AGNES, fairest of the train ;

Who

46 The HIGHLANDER:

Who fled from TWEED to shun his hated arms,
 Intrusting fair CULENA with her charms ;
 Saw the disdainful nymph remote from aid,
 And bent his lustful eyes upon the maid.
 He rush'd with headlong ruffians from the wood,
 And seiz'd the fair : the virgins shriek aloud.
 For help, for help ! the struggling virgin cries,
 And as she shrieks, aloud the wood replies.
 ALPIN alone, --- his men were sent before,
 Stalk'd on his thoughtful way along the shore.
 The distant plaint assail'd the Hero's ear,
 He drew his sword and rush'd to save the fair.
 Before the chief the dastard CORBRED fled,
 And to her brave preserver left the maid.
 Prostrate on earth the lovely virgin lay,
 Her roses fade, and all her charms decay :
 In humid rest her bending eye-lids close ;
 With slow returns her bosom fell and rose :
 At length returning life her bosom warms,
 Glows in her cheeks, and lights up all her charms.

Thus when invading clouds the moon assail,
 The landskip fails, and fades the shining vale ;
 But soon as CYNTHIA rushes on the sight,
 Reviving fields are silver'd o'er with light.

Th' affrighted fair the gallant warrior leads
 To join, upon the sand, the flying maids.
 They croud their cautious steps along the sea,
 Quake at each breath, and tremble on their way;
 Their tim'rous breasts unsettl'd from surprize,
 To ev'ry side they dart their careful eyes.

Thus on the heathy wild the hunted deer
 Start at each blast, together croud thro' fear;
 Tremble and look about, before, behind,
 Then stretch along, and leave the mountain-wind.

The gallant youth presents the rescu'd fair,
 Confirms their trembling breasts, removes their care;
 The gen'rous story from herself they hear,
 And drink his praises with a greedy ear;
 Steal on the youth their eyes as AGNES spoke,
 And pour their flutt'ring souls at ev'ry look.

But fair CULENA feels a keener dart,
 It pierc'd her breast and sunk into her heart;
 She hears attentive, views, admires and loves,
 Her eye o'er all the man with pleasure roves.
 With painful joy she feels the flame increase,
 Her pride denies it, but her eyes confess:
 She starts, and blushing turns her eye aside,
 But love steps in, and steals a look from pride.

Thus

48 The HIGHLANDER:

Thus fair CULENA struggles up the stream,
And 'tempts in vain to quench the rising flame.
At length, with blushing cheek and bending look,
Th' imperial maid the warrior thus bespoke.
"O gen'rous chief! for thus your deeds wou'd say,
How shall our gratitude thy kindness pay?
INDULPH shall hear, and INDULPH shall reward;
Such gen'rous actions claim a king's regard."

She said: and thus the chief;--- "Imperial maid,
More than the debt thy approbation paid.
In this I did not strive with gallant men,
Or drive disorder'd squadrons from the plain;
But frighted from his prey a sensual slave,
The gloomy sons of guilt are never brave.
Whoe'er wou'd seize on a defenceless fair,
Wou'd shun the sword and fly amain from war."

He said, and stalk'd away with manly state,
Grandeur, with awe commix'd, inform'd his gait.
His pond'rous mail reflects the trembling day,
And all his armour-rings along the way.

The royal maid observes him as he flies,
In silence stands, and from her bosom sighs,
Slowly moves on before the silent fair,
And in the palace shuts her secret care.

Mean time young Alpin seeks the king and peers;
But fair Culena in his bosom bears.
In vain against the rising flame he strove,
For all the man dissolv'd at once to love.

Within the high-arch'd hall the nobles sat,
And form'd in council the reviving state;
For instant peace solicitous prepare,
And raise a bulwark 'gainst the future war.
No high-flown zeal the patriot hurl'd along,
No secret gold engag'd the speaker's tongue.
No jarring seeds are by a tyrant sown,
Nor cunning senate undermines the throne.
To public good their public thoughts repair,
And CALEDONIA is the gen'ral care.
No orator in pompous phrases shines,
Or veils with public weal his base designs.
Truth stood conspicuous, undisguis'd by art,
They spoke the homely language of the heart.
Arriv'd the gallant warrior of the night;
They hear with eager joy the gloomy fight.
His conduct, courage, and compassion raise,
And ev'ry voice is forward in his praise.

The great DUMBAR his awful stature rears,
His temples whiten'd with the snow of years.

50 The HIGHLANDER:

On the brave youth he bends his solemn look,
 Then, turning round, thus to the nobles spoke.
 " Beneath the royal banner, Scots afar
 Had urg'd on Humber's banks the foreign war ;
 My father dead, tho' young I took the shield,
 And led my kindred-warriors to the field.
 The noble CALEDONIAN camp was laid
 Within the bosom of a spacious mead.
 Green-rising hills encompass'd it around,
 And these king Malcolm with his archers crown'd;
 Full on the right a spacious wood arose,
 And thither night convey'd a band of foes.
 The king commands a chief to clear the wood,
 And I the dang'rous service claim aloud.
 I went, expell'd the foes, and kill'd their lord,
 And ever since have worn his shining sword.
 I now retire from war, in age to rest;
 Take it brave youth ; for you can wield it best."

He said, and reach'd the sword.----The youth
 reply'd,

Shooting the heavy blade athwart his side,
 " My lord with gratitude this sword I take,
 Esteem the present for the giver's sake.

It still may find the way it oft explor'd,
And glut with hostile blood its second lord ;
To bloody honour hew its wasteful path,
A faithful sickle in the fields of death.

He thus.---With placid mein great INDULPH rose,
And spoke ; " Thus always meet our Albion's foes ;
With foreign blood your native arms adorn,
And boldly fight for ages yet unborn.
For us, my lords, fought all our godlike fires ;
The debt we owe to them, our race requires :
Tho' future arms our country should enslave,
She shall acquit our ashes in the grave ;
Posterity degen'rate, as they groan,
Shall bless their fires, and call their woes their own.
Let us, my lords, each virt'ous spark inspire,
And where we find it, blow it to a fire.
Thy service, gallant ALPIN, in this war,
Shall both be INDULPH's and the senate's care.
Mean time, with manly sports and exercise
Let us from bus'ness turn the mental eyes :
The mind relax'd acquires a double force,
And with new vigour finishes the course."

He added not : the godlike chiefs obey ;
All rise at once ; great INDULPH leads the way.

The palace here, and there a virid mound,
Confine a flow'ry spot of grassy ground.
The under-rock, emerging thro' the green,
Chequers with hoary knobs the various scene.
Thither repair the chiefs and scepter'd king,
And bend upon the plain the hollow ring.
Obedient servants from the palace bear
The horny bow, the helm, the shining spear,
The mail, the corslet, and the brazen shield;
And throw the ringing weight upon the field.
Imperial INDULPH, tow'ring o'er the plain,
With placid words address'd the warrior-train:
" Let those who bend the stubborn bow arise,
And with the feather'd shaft dispute this prize;
An antique bow a BALEARIAN wove,
When Romans thunder'd on our ALBION's shore.
The skilful archer, dealing death afar,
Threw on our Scottish host the distant war;
Great FERGUS springs, a king devoid of fear,
And thro' his body shoots the reeking spear;
The bloody spoil thro' striving cohorts brings,
And sends this relique down to after kings."

Thus, grasping the long bow, the monarch said:
Rose valiant Grahame and youthful SOMERLED.

Next GOWAL in the strife demands a part,
Fam'd on his native hills to wing the dart.

Full on the mound a helm, their aim, was plac'd ;
And GOWAL drew the nerve, first, to his breast ;
The bow reluctant yields, then backward springs ;
The nerve resounds, thro' air the arrow sings.
Close to the aim, the earth the arrow meets,
And as it vibrates the bright helmet beats.
Applause ensues.--- The shaft was sent by Grahame,
And cut its brazen journey thro' the aim.
The prize on him the murm'ring chiefs bestow,
Till SOMERLED assumes the antient bow.
The dancing chord the leaping arrow left,
And, rushing, took on end Grahame's birchen shaft ;
Tore on its way, around the shivers fly,
And SOMERLED brings off the prize with joy.

“ Who,” cries the king, “ this shield his prize
shall bear,

And fling with skilful hand the martial spear ?
Behind this buckler mighty KENNETH stood,
When Tay, impurpled, ran with Pictish blood.”

He said, and plac'd a mark, the knobby round,
And measur'd back with equal steps the ground.

The waving shaft is planted on the mound;
And with applause the neighb'ring rocks resound.

Young SOMERLED wrench'd from the rock a
quoit,

A huge, enormous, sharp, unwieldy weight;
Such now-a-days as many panting swains
A witness rear on long-contested plains ::
Slow-bending down, at length the hero springs ;
The rolling rock along the heavens sings ;
Falling, it shakes at once the neighb'ring ground,
And on the face of earth indents a wound.

Thus when strong winds the aged tow'r invade,
And throw the shapeless ruin from its head;
It falls and cleaves its bed into the ground ;
The valley shakes, and rocks complain around.

All try the mark to reach, but try in vain;
All, falling short, unequal wound the plain.

ALPIN with diffidence assumes the stone,

For such a space had SOMERLED o'er thrown:

Th' unwieldy rock a while he weighs with care,

* Then, springing, sends it whizzing thro' the air;

The wond'ring warriors view it as it rolls ;

Far o'er the distant mark the discus falls :

56 The HIGHLANDER:

It shakes the plain and deals a gaping wound;
Such as when headlong torrent's tear the ground.

Th' applauding chiefs own in the manly game
The Hero great, as in the fields of fame.

CULENA, leaning on her snowy arms
Observant, from the window points her charms.
Th' imperial virgin saw with pleasing pain,
The fav'rite youth victorious on the plain:
Sadly she sigh'd, accusing cruel fate,
Which chain'd her in captivity of state.

The veil of night had now inwrapt the pole;
The feast renew'd, goes round the sparkling bowl.
Great INDULPH rose with favour-speaking mein;
Approaching ALPIN thus the king began:
" Say, will the stranger tell from whence he came
To reap this harvest of unrivall'd fame?
Nobler the youth, who, tho' before unknown,
From merit mounts to virtue and renown,
Than he, set up by an illustrious race,
Totters aloft, and scarce can keep his place!"
The monarch spoke:---attentive look the peers,
And long to drink his voice with greedy ears.

End of Canto fourth.

CANTO V.

C A N T O V.

THE Hero, rising from his lofty seat,
Thus unpresumptuously accosts the great:
“ The fame of DENMARK pass’d our mountains o’er,
And fill’d our ears on ABRIA’s distant shore :
Brave RYNOLD starts :---- the aged chief alarms,
And kindles all his family to arms.
A hundred youths, who, from the sounding wood,
Or tow’ring mountain brought their living food,
Obey the bag-pipe’s voice ; for all, in view
Of RYNOLD’s seat, the friendly Canton grew.
The hoary warrior leads the onward path,
No stranger to the road which led to death.
Behind advancing, I, with martial care,
Lead on the youthful thunder-bolts of war ;
With arms anticipate the kindling fire,
And move to ev’ry motion of my fire.

“ On GRAMPUS, night her mantle round us throws ;
We slept in heath---the dappled morn arose :
Descending thence pursue our headlong way,
And cross the silver errors of the TAY.
Groans, feeble shrieks, ascending from the vale,
Speak on the pinions of the southern gale.

58 The HIGHLANDER:

A dismal scene breaks on our distant eyes;
 Here one pursues, and there another flies.
 This breathes his life thro' the impurpled wound,
 While his proud villa smokes along the ground.
 That with the foe maintains unequal strife,
 While his dear offspring fly, and dearer wife.

“The senior saw it with indignant eyes,
 And bid, at once, his kindred-ranks arise.
 With hasty steps we seize a virid brow,
 And form a sable cloud above the foe.
 Thus on the mountain's brow, I oft have seen
 The must'ring clouds brew torrents for the plain;
 At length the blust'ring south begins to roar;
 And heav'n descends impetuous in a show'r;
 The bubbling floods foam down the hill, and spread
 A swimming deluge on the subject mead.

“Thus RYNOLD formed on the mountain's brow,
 And headlong rush'd into the vale below.
 While on the banks of TAY terrific shine
 The steel-clad foe, and stretch the hostile line.
 They form a wall along the flowing flood,
 And awful gleam their arms, an iron wood.
 We shout, and rush upon the hostile throng;
 The echoing fields with iron clangour rung.

Firm stood the foe, nor made they flight their care,
 But hand to hand return'd the equal war :
 Man close to man, and shield conjoin'd to shield,
 They with the stable phalanx keep the field.
 With pointed spear I mark'd the stoutest foe,
 And heav'n directed home the happy blow :
 He tumbles backward to the groaning flood :
 TAY circles round, and mingles with his blood.
 My kindred-youth their useful weapons wield,
 Fomenting the confusion of the field.
 DANE fell on DANE, and man transfix'd his man,
 Till bloody torrents smok'd along the plain.
 At length they fly along the banks of TAY ;
 Their guilty leader points th' inglorious way.
 Eager we follow : --- still the foe with art
 Wound as they fly, and shoot th' inverted dart.
 RYNOLD is wounded. --- Still he urg'd the foe ;
 While down his limbs the crimson torrents flow :
 With eager voice he still foments the strife,
 Preferring ALBION's liberty to life.

“ An antient pile uprear'd its rev'rent head,
 And from its lofty seat survey'd a mead :
 The mould'ring walls confess'd their beauty past ;
 A fragment falls with each invading blast.

60 The HIGHLANDER :

Old arms above the gate time's empire own ;
The rampant lion moulders in the stone :
Tall elms around, an old and shatter'd band,
Their naked arms erect, like centries stand.

“ Within the ruin'd walls their fear inclose
The desp'rate squadrons of the flying foes.
An antient plane, whose leaf-dismantled weight
Rude winds o'erturn'd, secures the shapeless gate.
On ev'ry side my quick array I form,
Prepar'd at once the muniment to storm.
Missing my fire, I fly to find the chief,
And give the wounded all a son's relief.

“ Far on the plain the wounded warrior creeps,
And scarcely moves along his tott'ring steps ;
But still, far as his feeble voice cou'd bear,
He kindles with his words the distant war.
Quick I approach'd :--- He first the silence broke ;
And leaning on his lance, the warrior spoke.”

“ Say, why returns young ALPIN from the fight?
Pursue the foe, and urge the DANISH flight.
I sink, my son, I sink into the grave ;
You cannot me, your country, ALPIN, save.”

No more he said. --- I, mournful, thus reply,
Compassion melting in my filial eye,

O fire, the DANES, within yon walls secur'd,
 Will share our pity, or must feel our sword:
 Of filial duty what his wants require,
 I come to offer for a dying fire."

"He thus returns: still good, still gen'rous mind!
 My wants are, ALPIN, of no earthly kind:
 The world, the fading world, retires from view;
 Earth cloy's me now, and all it has, but you.
 Go, ALPIN, go; within that lofty wood
 A hermit lives; a holy man and good!
 Relieve, my son, relieve me of my cares,
 And for the dying RYNOLD raise his pray'rs."

"Thus said;---himself the wounded warrior laid,
 Within the coolness of a birchen shade;
 Some youths around employ their friendly care,
 And o'er the dying shed the mournful tear.
 Around the antient fastness guards I sent;
 And to the lofty wood my journey bent.
 Two rising hills, whose brows tall pop'lars grace,
 With stretching arms a woody plain embrace;
 Along the tree-set vale a riv'let flow'd,
 And murmur'd softly thro' the under-wood:
 Along the purling stream my steps I bear,
 And seek the lonely mansions of the seer.

Irreg'lar

Irreg'lar files of tow'ring elms embrace,
In their calm bosom, an enamel'd space.
Full at the end a rock with sable arms,
Stretch'd o'er a moss-grown cave, a grotto forms.
A silver stream, clear-issuing from the stones,
In winding mazes thro' the meadow runs;
Depending flow'rs their vary'd colours bind,
Hang o'er the entrance, and defend the wind.
On a green bank the holy seer is laid,
Where weaving branches cloud the chequer'd shade;
In solemn thought his hoary head's inclin'd,
And his white locks wave in the fanning wind.

“ With rev'rent steps approaching, I began.
“ O blest with all that dignifies the man!
Who far from life, and all its noisy care,
Enjoy'st the aim of all that wander there:
Let, holy father, thy propitious aid
Guide dying RYNOLD thro' the deathful shade.”
I said: --- the prophet heav'n-ward lifts his eyes,
Long fix'd in solemn thought, and thus replies;
“ Vain mortals! worms of earth! How can ye dare
To deem your deeds not providence's care?
Heav'n looks on all below with equal eye:
They long escape, but yet the wicked die.

With

With distant time, O youth ! my soul's impress;
Futurity is lab'ring in my breast :

Thy blood, which rolling down from FERGUS came,
Passes thro' time, a pure untainted stream.

ALBION shall in her pristine glory shine,
And, blest herself, blest the FERGUSIAN line.

“ But ah ! I see grim treason rear its head,
Pale ALBION trembling, and her monarch dead ;
The tyrant wield his scepter 'smear'd with blood ;
O base return ! but still great heav'n is good :
He falls, he falls : see how the tyrant lies !

And SCOTLAND brightens up her weeping eyes :
The banish'd race, again, resume their own ;
Nor SYRIA boasts her royal saint alone.

Its gloomy front the low'ring season clears,
And gently rolls a happy round of years.

“ Again I see contending chiefs come on,
And, as they strive to mount, they tear the throne ;
To civil arms the horrid trumpet calls,
And CALEDONIA by her children falls.

The storm subsides to the calm flood of peace ;
The throne returns to FERGUS' antient race.

Glad CALEDONIA owns their lawful sway ;
Happy in them, in her unhappy they !

64 The HIGHLANDER:

See each inwapt untimely in his shroud,
 For ever sleeping in his gen'rous blood!
 Who on thy mournful tomb refrains the tear?
 O regal charms, unfortunately fair!
 Dark FACTION grasps her in his fable arms,
 And crushes down to death her struggling charms:
 The rose, in all its gaudy liv'ry drest,
 Thus faintly struggles with the blust'ring west.

“ Why mention him in whom th' eternal fates
 Shall bind in peace the long-discording states?
 See SCOT and SAXON coalesce'd in one,
 Support the glory of the common crown.
 BRITAIN no more shall shake with native storms,
 But o'er the trembling nations lift her arms.”

He spoke, and in the cave inclos'd his age:
 In wonder lost I leave the hermitage;
 Measure with thoughtful steps my backward way,
 While to the womb of night retires the day.
 Pale doubtful twilight broods along the ground:
 The forest nods its sleeping head around.

Before my eyes a ghastly vision stood;
 A mangled man, his bosom stain'd with blood!
 Silent and sad the phantom stood confess'd,
 And shew'd the streaming flood-gates of his breast.

Then

Then pointing to the Dome his tardy hand,
Thither his eyes my silent way command.
He hands my sword, emits a feeble groan,
And weakly says, "revenge me, O my son!"
I to reply ---- he hifs'd his way along,
As breezes sing thro' reeds their shrilly song.
I stood aghast, then wing'd me to obey;
Across the field I sweep my hasty way.
The men I arm; --- the firm barrier we ply;
And those who dare dispute the passage die.
With dying groans the lonely walls resound:
I on the guilty leader deal a wound;
Thro' his bright helm the sword its journey takes;
He falls, and thus with dying accents speaks:
 " Just heav'n! in vain the wicked shun thy pow'r;
Tho' late thy vengeance, yet the blow is sure.
This earth receiv'd the blood from off my hands;
A just return, my own, my own demands!
In night's dead hour, when all, but treason, slept,
With ruffian bands, a bloody train, I crept.
'Twas here, 'twas here, oh! long-deserved death!
'Twas here the godlike man resign'd his breath:
The sleeping fam'ly we with blood surprize,
And send the palace flaming to the skies.

I fled, but fled, alas! pursued by fate;
 'Tis now I find that I have sinn'd too late.
 O MALCOLM! O my king! before my eyes
 He stands confess; --- accurst DOVALUS dies."

His guilty soul in these dire accents fled,
 I left with hasty steps the silent dead.
 Beneath the birch my aged sire I found;
 His life was ebbing thro' the purple wound.
 On me the aged senior lifts his eyes,
 And mixes feeble accents with his sighs.

"ALPIN, the commerce of this world I leave,
 Convey my reliques to my father's grave.
 Ten friendly youths the homely rites shall pay;
 Lead thou the rest, my ALPIN, to the fray:
 DENMARK invades: ---- this was a pilf'ring band,
 Who spread divided terror o'er the land."

He said: a qualm succeeds; tears fill my eyes,
 And woe, securely, shuts the gates of voice;
 Silent and sad I hang the dying o'er,
 And with warm tears intenerate his gore."

The chief resumes: ---- "my brave, my only son!
 Yes, ALPIN, I may call thee all my own;
 I shall not veil a secret in my death;
 Take then this story of my latest breath:

The twentieth season liv'ries o'er the year,
Since on the SEVERN's banks I met the war ;
In private feud, against a SAXON lord,
The great DUMBAR had rais'd his kindred-sword :
I on the foe my bow auxiliar bend,
And join afar our fam'ly's antient friend :
Returning thence I next the TAY divide,
That very night the great King MALCOLM dy'd.
My clan in arms might then preserve their king ;
But Fate withstood ;---- along in arms we ring.
An infant's cries, at distance, took my ear,
I went, found thee, a helpless orphan there.

The king, who long infix'd in dumb surprize,
Run o'er the speaking youth with searching eyes,
Here stopt him short, his arms around him flung,
And silent on th' astonish'd warrior hung ;
My son, my son ! at last, perplex'd, he cries,
My DUFFUS !----tears hung in his joyful eyes :
The crowding tide of joy his words suppress'd ;
He clasps the youth, in silence, to his breast.
Th' astonish'd chiefs, congeal'd in dumb amaze,
Stiffen'd to silence, on each other gaze.
Sudden their cheeks are vary'd with surprize,
And glad disorder darted from their eyes.

68 The H I G H L A N D E R :

As when before the fwains, with instant found,
The forky bolt descending tears the ground;
They stand; with stupid gaze each other eye:
So stood the chiefs oppress'd with sudden joy.

At length, relax'd from fetters of surprize,
"Welcome, brave youth!" the scepter'd senior cries,
"Welcome to honours justly thine alone,
Triumphant mount, tho' late, thy father's throne.
To thee with joy the scepter I resign,
And waft the kingdom to the coming line."

He said: and thus the youth; "I only know
To shoot the spear, and bend the stubborn bow;
Unskill'd to stretch o'er nations my command,
Or in the scales of judgment poise a land.

Wield still the scepter which with grace you wear,
And guide with steadier hand the regal car;

While, looking up to thee, as I obey,
I first transcribe my future rules of sway;
Till late enjoy the throne which you bequeath,
And only date dominion from thy death."

Resolv'd he spoke:----bursts of applause around
Break on the chief:----with joy the halls resound.

As when some valiant youth returns from far,
And leaves the fields of death, and finish'd war;

Whom

Whom time and honest scars another made,
 And friendly hope long plac'd among the dead;
 At first his fire looks with indifference on,
 But soon he knows, and hangs upon his son.

So all the chiefs the royal youth embrace;
 While joys, tumultuous, rend the lofty place.

While thus the king, and noble chiefs rejoice,
 Harmonious bards exalt the tuneful voice:
 A select band by INDULPH'S bounty fed,
 To keep in song the mem'ry of the dead!
 They handed down the ancient rounds of time,
 In oral story and recorded rhyme.

The vocal quire in tuneful concert sings
 Exploits of heroes, and of antient kings:
 How first in FERGUS CALEDONIA rose;
 What hosts she conquer'd, and repell'd what foes.
 Thro' time in reg'lar series they decline,
 And touch each name of the FERGUSIAN line;
 Great CARACTACUS, FERGUS' awful sword;
 That bravely lost his country, this restor'd:
 HIBERNIA'S spoils, GREGORIUS' martial fire;
 The stern avenger of his murder'd fire:
 Beneath his sword, as yet, whole armies groan,
 And a whole nation paid the blood of ONE.

At

70 The HIGHLANDER:

At length descend the rough impetuous strains:
To valiant DUFFUS, and the slaughter'd DANES:
The battle lives in verse; in song they wound;
And falling squadrons thunder on the ground.

Thus, in the strain, the bards impetuous roll,
And quaff the gen'rous spirit of the bowl;
At length from the elab'rate song respire;
The chiefs remove, and all to rest retire..

End of Canto fifth.

CANTO VI.

C A N T O VI.

NOW, in the blushing east, the morn arose ;
Its lofty head, in grey, the palace shows.
Within, the king and valiant chiefs prepare
To urge the chace, and wage the mountain-war.
The busy menials thro' the palace go ;
Some whet the shaft, and others try the bow ;
This view'd the toils; that taught the horn to sound;
Another animates the sprightly hound!

For the fleet chace the fair CULENA arms,
And from the gloom of sorrow 'wakes her charms:
The Hero's royal birth had reach'd her ear,
And sprightly hope assum'd the throne of care :
Around her slender waist the cincture slides;
Her mantle flows behind in crimson tides.
Bright rings of gold her braided ringlets bind ;
The rattling quiver, laden, hangs behind.
She seiz'd, with snowy hand, the polish'd bow,
And mov'd before, majestically flow.
The chiefs behind advance their sable forms;
And with dark contrast heighten all her charms.

Thus, on expanded plains of heavenly blue,
Thick-gather'd clouds the queen of night pursue;

And

And as they croud behind their sable lines,
The virgin-light with double lustre shines.

The maid her glowing charms thus onward bears;
His manly height, aside, young DUFFUS rears.
Her beauty he, his manhood she admires;
Both mov'd along, and fed their silent fires.

The HUNTERS to the lofty mountains came:
Their eager breasts anticipate the game:
The forest they divide, and sound the horn;
The gen'rous hounds within their bondage burn:
Struggle for freedom, long to stretch away,
And in the breeze already find the prey.

At the approaching noise the starting deer
Croud on the heath, and stretch away in fear;
Wave, as they spring, their branchy heads on high,
Skim o'er the wild, and leave the aching eye.
The eager hounds, unchain'd, devour the heath;
They shoot along, and pant a living death:
Gaining upon their journey, as they dart,
Each from the herd selects a flying hart.
Some urg'd the bounding stag a different way,
And hung with open mouth upon the prey:
Now they traverse the heath, and now assail
The rising hill, now skim along the vale:

Now

Now they appear, now leave the aching eyes,
The master follows with exulting cries ;
Fits, as he flies, the arrow to the string ;
The rest within the rattling quiver ring :
He, as they shoot the lofty mountains o'er,
Pursues in thought, and sends his soul before.
Thus they with supple joints the chace pursue,
Rise on the hills, and vanish on the brow.

On the blue heav'ns arose a night of clouds;
The radiant lord of day his glory shrouds:
The rushing whirlwind speaks with growling breath,
Roars thro' the hill, and scours along the heath :
Deep rolling thunder, rumbling from afar,
Proclaims with murm'ring voice th' aerial war :
Fleet light'nings flash in awful streams of light,
Dart thro' the gloom, and vanish from the sight :
The bluff'ring winds thro' heav'ns black concave
found,

Rain batters earth, and smokes along the ground.
Down the steep hill the rushing torrents run,
And cleave with headlong rage their journey on;
The lofty mountains echo to the fall ;
A muddy deluge stagnates on the vale.

74 The HIGHLANDER:

CULENA mov'd a long the level ground ;
 A hart descends before the op'ning hound :
 From the recoiling chord she twang'd the dart,
 And pierc'd the living vigour of the hart:
 He starts, he springs ; but falling as he flies,
 Pours out his tim'rous soul with weeping eyes.
 As o'er the dying prey the huntress sigh'd,
 Before the wind heav'n pours a sable tide,
 And lowring threats a storm : A rocky cave,
 Where monks successive hew'd their house and
 grave,

Invites into its calm recess the fair:
 The rev'rend father breath'd abroad his pray'r.
 The valiant DUFFUS comes with panting breath,
 Faces the storm, and stalks across the heath.
 His sleeky hounds, a faithful tribe, before,
 Are bath'd with blood, and vary'd o'er with gore.
 Drench'd with the rain, the noble youth descends,
 And, in the cave, the growling storm defends.
 Amaz'd, astonish'd, fix'd in dumb surprize,
 The lovers stood, but spoke with silent eyes :
 At length the distant colloquy they rear,
 Run o'er the chace, the mountain, and the deer.

Far from the soul th' evasive tongue departs,
Their eyes are only faithful to their hearts.

The winding volumes of discourse return,
To hostile fields by gallant DUFFUS shorn.
Th' imperial maid must hear it o'er again,
How fell DOVALUS was by DUFFUS slain:
How, by the son, the father's murderer fell.
The kindling virgin flames along the tale.
She turns, she quakes, and from her bosom sighs,
And all her soul comes melting in her eyes.
Flames, not unequal, all the youth possess,
He, for the first, hears willingly his praise.
Praise, harshly heard from warriors, kings and
lords,

Came down in balm on fair CULENA's words.

The royal pair thus fed the mutual fire,
Now speak, now pause, when both alike admire.
He longs to vent the passion of his soul,
And she the tempests in her bosom roll.
Now he begun; but shame his voice oppress;
Loth to offend, his eyes must tell the rest.
At length, upon the headlong passion born,
He spoke his love, and had a kind return;

G

She

76 The HIGHLANDER:

She sigh'd, she own'd, and bent her modest eyes,
While blushing roses on her cheeks arise.
Thus, on the vale, the poppy's blushing head,
Brimful of summer-show'rs, to earth is weigh'd,
Fann'd with the rising breeze it slow inclines,
While o'er the mead the rosy lustre shines.

INDULPH into his cave the hermit led,
Found erring thro' the mountains stormy head.
CULENA, starting as the king appears,
Looks ev'ry way, and trembles as she fears:
On her mild face the modest blushes rise,
And fair disorder darted from her eyes.
The parent-king observ'd the virgin whole,
And read the harmless secret in her soul.
A while the maze of calm discourse they wind;
At length the king unveils his royal mind.

“ Warded from ALBION's head the storm is o'er;
Her prince is found, her foes are now no more:
Thro' time 'tis ours her happiness to trace;
'Tis ours to bind the future bands of peace.
Posterity for ALBION's crown may fight,
And couch ambition in the name of right;
With specious titles urge the civil war,
And to a crown their guilty journey tear:

I end these fears :----the streams shall run in one ;
Nor struggling kindred strive to mount the throne.
I shield my daughter with young DUFFUS' arms,
And bless the warrior with CULENA's charms."
Thus said the king. Their willing hands they join :
The rev'rent priest runs o'er the rites divine.
The solemn ceremony clos'd with pray'r;
And DUFFUS call'd his own the royal fair.
The storm is ceas'd: the clouds together fly,
And clear, at once, the azure fields of sky :
The mid-day sun pours down his sultry flame,
And the wet heath waves glist'ring in the beam.

The hunter chiefs appear upon the brow,
Fall down the hill, and join the king below:
Slow, thro' the narrow vale, their steps they bear ;
Behind advance the spoils of Sylvan war.
Far on a head-land point condens'd they stood,
And threw their eyes o'er ocean's sable flood ;
Tall ships advance afar : their canvas-sails
In their swoln bosom gather all the gales ;
Floating along the sable back of sea,
Before the wind they cut their spumy way ;
Bend in their course, majestically slow,
And to the land their lazy journey plow.

Thus spungy clouds on heav'n's blue vault arise,
And float, before the wind, along the skies;
Their wings oppos'd to the illustrious sun,
Shine, as they move, majestically on.

Thus godlike HAROLD brought his floating aid,
Unknowing SUEÑO's number'd with the dead.
From ANGLIA's coasts he call'd his troops afar,
To aid his brother in the foreign war.

Arriv'd, he in the wave the anchor throws,
Attempts to land, and ALBION's chiefs oppose;
Wave on the fatal shore the pointed spear,
And send the arrow whizzing thro' the air.

The DANES return the flying death afar,
And, as they croud away, maintain the war.
An arrow tore thro' air its murmur'ing path,
Fell on the king, and weigh'd him down to death:
Quick, from the wound, the blood tumult'ous
sprung,

And o'er the sand the reeking weapon flung:
Prone on the strand, an awful trunk he lies,
While sleep eternal steals upon his eyes.
The mournful chiefs around the dying stood,
Some raise the body, others stem the blood:

In vain their care ; ---the soul for ever fled,
And fate had number'd INDULPH with the dead.

CULENA, whom young DUFFUS set apart,
With a green bank secur'd the hostile dart.
Her father's fate assail'd her tender ear,
She beat her snowy breast, and tore her hair :

Frantic along the sand she run, she flew,
And on the corse distressful beauty threw :
She call'd her father's shade with filial cries,
And all the daughter streaming from her eyes.
Bent on revenge the furious DUFFUS strode,
And ey'd, with angry look, the sable flood.

A ship, which near had took its nodding stand,
Fix'd with the pitchy haulser to the strand,
Remains of SUEÑO's fleet, the Hero view'd,
And to the mournful warriors spoke aloud :
“ Let these whose actions are enchain'd by years
Honour the mighty dead with friendly tears ;
While we of youth, descending to the main,
Exact severe atonement of the DANE.”

He thus : and rushing thro' the billowy roars ;
With brawny arms his rapid journey oars ;
Divides with rolling chest the ridgy sea,
Lashing the bubbling liquid in his way.

The empty hull from wave to wave is tost,
Nods as it floats, the sport of ev'ry blast.

The CALEDONIAN chiefs again pursue:
The SCANDINAVIAN fleet o'er ocean flew.
T'elude the foe the DANES fly diff'rent ways;
And cut with sep'rate prows the hoary seas.
Some bear to sea, some rush upon the land,
And fly amain on earth, a trembling band.

As, in pursuit of doves, on rapid wings
The darting hawk thro' air his journey sings;
But when the parting flock divides the sky,
Hovers, in doubt this way or that to fly.
So undetermin'd long young DUFFUS stood;
At length he sigh'd, and thus begun aloud:
“ While thus, O chiefs, we urge the flying DANE,
Unmourn'd, unhonour'd lies the mighty slain;
'Tis ours to grace with woe great INDULPH's bier,
And o'er his fallen virtue shed the tear.”

The warrior spoke : the CALEDONIANS sigh'd,
And with returning prow the waves divide;
With swelling sail bring on the fatal shore,
Where, o'er the dead, the aged chiefs deplore.
The warriors bear their monarch as they come,
In sad procession to the silent tomb ;

Forfake

82 The HIGHLANDER:

Forfake with lazy steps the sounding main,
And move a sad and lamentable train.

Behind the dead the tuneful bards appear,
And mingle with their elegies the tear:
From their sad hearts the mournful numbers flow,
In all the tuneful melody of woe.

In grief's solemnity CULENA leads
A mournful train of tear-distilling maids:
Above the rest, the beauteous queen appears,
And heightens all her beauties with her tears.

Now in the tomb the godlike INDULPH laid,
Shar'd the dark couch with the illustrious dead:
All o'er his grave the mournful warriors sigh,
And give his dust the tribute of the eye:
Removing, as the night inwrapt the sky,
They share the nuptial feast with solemn joy.
The royal DUFFUS, with a husband's care,
Sooth'd, in his martial arms, the forrowing fair;
O'er ALBION's rocks exerted his command,
And stretch'd his scepter o'er a willing land.

F I N I S.

ELFRIDA,

A

Dramatic Poem.

Written on the MODEL of

The Ancient GREEK Tragedy.

By Mr. M A S O N.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for G. HAMILTON and J. BALFOUR.

M,DCC,LV.

Persons of the DRAMA.

Orgar, Earl of Devonshire.

Chorus, of British Virgins.

Elfrida, Daughter to *Orgar*,

Athelwold, Husband to *Elfrida*.

Edwin, a Messenger.

Edgar, King of England.

Orgar disguis'd in a Peasant's Habit speaks the Prologue.

SCENE, a Lawn before *Athelwold's* Castle in
Harewood Forest.

ELFRIDA,

A

Dramatic Poem.

EDGAR.

HOW nobly does this venerable wood,
Gilt with the glories of the orient sun,
Embosom yon fair mansion! The soft air
Salutes me with most cool and temp'rate breath;
And, as I tread, the flow'r-besprinkled lawn
Sends up a gale of fragrance. I should guess,
If e'er content deign'd visit mortal clime,
This was her place of dearest residence.
Grant heav'n! I find it such. 'Tis now three months,
Since first Earl *Athelwold* espous'd my daughter.
He then besought me, for some little space
The nuptials might be secret; many reasons,
He said, induc'd to this: I made no pause,
But, resting on his prudence, to his will
Gave absolute concurrence. Soon as married,
He to this secret seat convey'd *Elfrida*;
Convey'd her as by stealth, enjoy'd, and left her:
Yet not without I know not what excuse
Of call to court, of *Edgar's* royal friendship,
And *England's* welfare. To his Prince he went:
And since, as by intelligence I gather,
He oft returns to this his cloyster'd wife;
But ever with a privacy most studied.

His

His visits, as they're stol'n, are also short;
 Seldom beyond the circuit of one sun:
 Then back to court, while she his absence mourns
 Full many a lonely hour. I brook not this.
 Had *Athelwold* espous'd some base-born peasant,
 'This usage had been apt: but when he took
 My daughter to his arms, he took a virgin,
 Thro' whose rich veins the blood of ancient kings
 Ran in unsullied stream. Yes, her high lineage
 Would give her place and notice with the noblest
 In *Edgar's* court. *Elfrida's* beauty too
 (I speak not from a father's foolish fondness)
 Would shine amid the fairest, and reflect
 No vulgar glory on that Beauty's master.
 This act bespeaks the madman. Who, that own'd
 An em'rald, jasper, or rich chrysolite,
 Would hide its lustre? he would bid it blaze
 Conspicuous on his brow. Haply *Athelwold*
 May have espous'd some other. 'Sdeath he durst not.
 My former feats in arms must have inform'd him,
 That *Orgar*, while he liv'd, would never prove
 A traitor to his honour. If he has——
 This aged arm is not so much unstrung
 By slack'ning years, but just revenge will brace it.
 And, by yon awful heav'n—But hold, my rage.
 I came to search into this matter coolly.
 Hence, to conceal the father and the Earl,
 This pilgrim's staff, and scrip, and all these marks
 Of vagrant poverty.

Cho. (within) Hail to thy living light, ambrosial morn!

All hail thy roseate ray!

Or. But hark, the sound of sweetest minstrelsy
 Breaks on my ear. The females, I suppose,
 Whom *Athelwold* has left my child's attendants:
 'That, when she 'wails the absence of her Lord,
 Their lenient airs, and sprightly-fancied songs,
 May steal away her woes. See, they approach:

I'll wait the cadence of their harmony,
And then address them with some feigned tale.

[*He retires.*]

O D E.

Cho. Hail to thy living light,
Ambrosial morn ! all hail thy roseat ray :
That bids gay Nature all her charms display
In varied beauty bright ;
That bids each dewy-spangled flowret rise,
And dart around its vermeil dies ;
Bids silver lustre-grace yon sparkling tide,
That winding warbles down the mountain's side.

Away, ye goblins all
Wont the bewilder'd traveller to daunt ;
Whose vagrant feet have trac'd your secret haunt
Beside some lonely wall,
Or shatter'd ruin of a moss-grown tow'r,
Where, at pale midnight's stillest hour,
Thro' each rough chink the solemn orb of night
Pours momentary gleams of trembling light.

Away, ye elves, away :
Shrink at ambrosial morning's living ray ;
That living ray, whose pow'r benign
Unfolds the scene of glory to our eye,
Where, thron'd in artless majesty,
The cherub Beauty sits on Nature's rustic shrine. —

CHORUS, ORGAR.

Cho. Silence, my sisters. Whence this rudeness, Stranger,
That thus has prompted thine unbidden ear
To listen to our strains ?

Or. Your pardon, Virgins :
I mean not rudeness, tho' I dar'd to listen ;
For ah ; what ear so fortify'd and barr'd
Against the tuneful force of vocal charms,
But would with transport to such sweet assailants
Surrender its attention ? never yet

Have

Have I past by the night-bird's 'custom'd spray,
 What time she pours her wild and artless song,
 Without attentive pause and silent rapture;
 How could I then, with savage disregard,
 Hear voices tun'd by nature sweet as hers,
 Grac'd with all art's addition?

Cho. Thy mean garb,
 And this thy courtly phrase but ill accord.
 Whence, and what art thou, Stranger?

Or. Virgins, know
 These limbs have oft been rob'd in fairer vest:
 But what avails it now? all have their fate;
 And mine has been most wretched.

Cho. May we ask
 What cruel cause——

Or. No! Let this hapless breast
 Still hide the melancholy tale.

Cho. We know,
 There oft is found an avarice in grief;
 And the wan eye of sorrow loves to gaze
 Upon its secret hoard of treasur'd woes
 In pining solitude. Perhaps thy mind
 Takes the same pensive cast: If not, indulge
 The tender temper of our virgin-souls,
 Which loves to melt in sympathizing tears
 And social sighs.

Or. Ah! ill would it become ye,
 To let the woes of such a wretch as I am,
 E'er dim your bright eyes with a pitying tear.

Cho. The eye, that will not weep another's sorrow,
 Should boast no gentler brightness than the glare,
 That reddens in the eye-ball of the wolf.
 Let us entreat——

Or. Know, Virgins, I was born
 To ample property of lands and flocks,
 On this side *Tweed*'s stream. My youth and vigor
 Atchiev'd full many a feat of martial prowess:
 Nor was my skill in chivalry unnoted
 In the fair volume of my sov'reign's love;

Who

Who ever held me in his best esteem,
 And closest to his person. When he paid,
 What all must pay, to fate ; and short-liv'd *Edwy*
 Mounted the vacant throne, which now his brother
 Fills (as loud fame reports) right royally ;
 I then, unfit for pageantry and courts,
 Retir'd me with a set of chosen vassals,
 To my paternal seat. But ah ! not long
 Had I enjoy'd the sweets of that recess,
 Ere by the savage inroads of base hinds,
 That sallied frequent from the Scottish heights,
 My lands were all laid waste, my people murder'd ;
 And I, thro' impotence of age unfit
 To quell their brutal rage, was forc'd to drag
 My mis'ries thro' the land, a friendless wand'rer.

Cho. We pity and condole thy wretched state,
 But we can do no more ; which, on thy part,
 Claims just returns of pity : for, whose lot
 Demands it more than theirs, whom fate forbids
 To taste the joys of courteous charity ;
 To wipe the trickling tears, which dew the cheek
 Of palsy'd age ; to smooth its furrow'd brow,
 And pay its grey hairs each dew reverence ?
 Yet such delight we are forbid to taste ;
 For 'tis our Lord's command, that not a stranger,
 However high or lowly his degree,
 Have entrance at these gates.

Or. Who may this tyrant——

Cho. Alas, no tyrant he ; the more our wonder
 At this harsh mandate : tenderness and pity
 Have made his breast their home. He is a man
 More apt, thro' inborn gentleness, to err,
 In giving mercy's tide too free a course,
 Than with a thrifty and illiberal hand
 To circumscribe its channel. This his praise
 You'll hear the general theme in *Edgar's* court :
 For *Edgar* ranks him first in his high favour ;
 Loads him with honours, which the Earl receives,
 As does the golden center frankincense,

Only

Only to spread a sacred gale of blessings
Thro' all the realm.

Or. Methinks, this pleasing portrait
Bears strong resemblance of Lord *Alhelwold*.

Cho. Himself: no Briton but has heard his fame.

Or. 'Tis wondrous strange; can you conceive no cause
For this his conduct?

Cho. None, that we may trust.

Or. Your garbs bespeak you for the fair attendants
Of some illustrious dame, the wife, or sister
Of this dread Earl.

Cho. On this head too, old man,
We are commanded a religious silence:
Which strictly we obey; for well we know
Fidelity's the best and fairest wreath,
That can adorn a servant's brow. Farewel,
Depart with our best wishes; we do trespass
To hold such open converse with a stranger.

Or. Stay, Virgins, stay: have ye no friendly shed,
But bord'ring on your castle, where these limbs
Might lay their load of misery for an hour?
Have ye no food, however mean and homely,
Wherewith I might support declining nature?
Ev'n while I speak, I feel my spirits fail;
And well, full well, I know, these trembling feet,
Ere I can pace a hundred steps, will sink
Beneath their wretched burthen.

Cho. Piteous sight!
What shall we do, my sisters? To admit
This man beneath the roof, would be to scorn
The Earl's strict interdict; and yet my heart
Bleeds to behold that white, old, rev'rend head
Bow'd with such misery.—Yes, we must aid him.
Hie thee, poor pilgrim, to yon neighbouring bow'r,
O'er which an old oak spreads his awful arm,
Mantled in brownest foliage, and beneath
The ivy, gadding from th' untwisted stem,
Curtains each verdant side. There thou may'st rest,
There also find some dry'd, autumnal fruit,

Lodg'd

E L F R I D A.

Lodg'd in the hollow of its aged trunk.
Much do we wish 'twere better fare.

Or. Kind heav'n !

Reward——

Cho. Nay ! stay not here to thank us,
But haste to give your age this poor assistance.
That done, we do conjure you leave the place
With cautious secrecy ; for, was it known,
That thus we trespass'd on our lord's command,
The consequence were fatal.

Or. Fairest maid !

Think not I'll basely draw down punishments
On my preservers. I withdraw. May blessings
Showr'd from yon fount of bliss repay your kindness.

[Exit *Orgar*.

Semichor. Yes, sisters, yes, when pale distress
Implores your aiding hand,
Let not a partial faithfulness,
Let not a mortal's vain command
Urge you to break th'unalterable laws
Of heav'n-descended charity.
Ah ! follow still the soft-ey'd deity ;
For know, each path she draws,
Along the plain of life,
Meets at the central dome of social joy.
Follow the soft-ey'd deity ;
She bids ye, as ye hope for blessings, blest.
Aid then the gen'ral cause of gen'ral happiness.

Semichor. Humanity ! thy awful strain
Shall ever meet our ear,
Sonorous, sweet, and clear.
And, as amid the sprightly-swelling train
Of dulcet notes, that breathe
From flute or lyre,
The deep base rolls its manly melody,
Guiding the tuneful choir ;
So thou, humanity, shall lead along
Th' accordant passions in their moral song,
And give our mental concert truest harmony.

B

Cho.

Cho. But see, *Elfrida* comes.

Should we again resume our former strain,
And hail the morn that paints her waking beauties;
Or wait her gentle bidding? Rather wait;
For, as I think, she seems in musing mood:
And there are times, when to the pensive soul
The warbling voice of softest melody
Seems but discordant harshness.

ELFRIDA, CHORUS.

Elf. O my Virgins,
With what a leaden and retarding weight,
Does expectation load the wing of time?
How have these three dull hours crept languid on,
Since first the crimson mantle of the morn
Skirted yon gay horizon? Say, my friends,
Have I miscounted? did not *Athelwold*
At parting fix this morn for his return,
This dear long-wish'd for morn? He did, he did,
And seal'd it with a kiss; I could not err.
And yet he comes not. He was wont outstrip
The sun's most early speed, and make its rising
To me unwish'd and needless. This delay
Creates strange doubts and scruples in my breast.
Courts throng with Beauties, and my *Athelwold*
Has a soft, susceptible heart, as prone
To yield its dove to ev'ry sparkling eye,
As is the musk-rose to dispense its fragrance
To ev'ry whisp'ring breeze; perhaps he's false,
Perhaps *Elfrida's* wretched.

Cho. See, *Elfrida*,
Ah see! how round yon branching elm the ivy
Twines its green chain, and poisons what supports it.
Not less injurious to the blooming shoots
Of growing love is sickly jealousy.

Elf. My mind nor pines with sickly jealousy,
Nor triumphs in security and peace.
Who loves, must fear, and sure who loves like me,
Must greatly fear.

Cho.

Cho. Yet whence the cause? Your Earl
Has ever yet (this little breach excepted)
Been punctual to appointment. Did his eye
Glow with less ardent passion when he left you,
Than at the first blest'd meeting? No, I mark'd him,
His parting glance shot fervent, constant love,
And fealty unalter'd. Do not fear him.

Elf. I should not fear him, were his present stay
The only cause. Alas, it is not so!

Why comes my Earl so secret to these arms?
Why, but because he fears some other Fair
Should hear of his stol'n transports? Why am I
Here shrouded up, like the pale votarist,
Who knows no visitant, save the lone owl,
That leaves his ivy-crested battlement,
And sails on slow wing thro' the cloyster'd isles,
Lis'ning her faintly orisons. Why am I
Deny'd to follow my departing lord
Whene'er his duty calls him to the palace?

Cho. Covet not that; the noblest proof of love
That *Athelwold* can give, is still to guard
Your tender beauties from the blasting taint
Of courtly gales. The delicate soft tints
Of snowy innocence, the crimson glow
Of blushing modesty, there all fly off,
And leave the faded face no nobler boast
Than well-rang'd, lifeless features. Ah, *Elfrida*,
Should you be doom'd, which happier fate forbid!
To drag your hours thro' all that nauseous scene
Of pageantry and vice; your purer breast,
True to its virtuous relish, soon would heave
A fervent sigh for innocence and *Harewood*.

Elf. You much mistake me, Virgins; the throng'd
palace

Were undesir'd by me, did not that palace
Detain my *Athelwold*. If he were here,
His presence would convert this range of oaks
To stately columns; these gay liv'ried flow'rs
To troops of gallant Ladies; and yon deer

That

That jutt their antlers forth in sportive fray,
 To armed knights at joust or tournament.
 If *Athelwold* dwelt here ; if no ambition
 Could lure his steps from love, and this still forest ;
 If I might never moan his time of absence,
 Longer than that which serv'd him for the chace
 Or of the wolf, or stag ; or when he bore
 The hood-wing'd falcon forth: might these, my Virgins,
 And these alone, be love's short intervals ;
 I should not have one thought remote from *Harewood*.

Cho. And would you wish that *Athelwold* should flight
 The weal of *England*, and on these light toys
 Waste his unvalued hours ? No ; fond *Elfrida* ;
 His active soul is wing'd for nobler flights :
 There let it soar, nor, like the lofty lark,
 That rides the sun-beam warbling, sudden drop
 And roost itself in the low earthy furrow.

Elf. What then, must *England*'s welfare hold my Earl
 For ever from these shades ?

Cho. We say not that.

The youth, who baths in pleasure's limpid stream
 At well-judg'd intervals, feels all his soul
 Nerv'd with recruited strength ; but if too oft
 He swims in sportive mazes thro' the flood,
 It chills his languid virtue. For this cause
 Your Earl forbids, that these enchanting groves,
 And their fair mistress, should possess him wholly.
 He knows he has a country and a king,
 That claim his first attention ; yet be lure,
 'Twill not be long, ere his unbending mind
 Shall seek a soft *asylum* from those cares,
 Amid th'embow'ring shades that veil *Elfrida*.

Elf. O be that speech prophetic ; may he soon
 Seek these embow'ring shades ! Mean while, my
 friends,

Tune some harmonious lay, whose sprightly notes
 Flow in such happy descant as may speed
 The lazy hours, that now move slowly on
 With dull and flagging pinion. For sweet music

Has

Has got a magic spell to aid their flight,
 And make them skim thro' their diurnal round
 Swift as the swallow circles. Come, ye Virgins,
 Ye have been nurs'd amid yon Cambrian rocks,
 Where yet posterity retains some vein
 Of that old minstrelsy, which whilom breath'd
 Thro' each time-honour'd grove of British oak.
 There, where the spreading consecrated boughs
 Fed the sage mistletoe, the holy Druids
 Lay rapt in moral musings; while the Bards
 Call'd from their wiry harps such solemn airs,
 As drew down fancy from the realms of light
 To paint some radiant vision on their minds
 Of high mysterious import. Virgins, wake
 Some strain as sweetly soothing. I, reclin'd
 On yonder neighb'ring bank, will watch his coming.
 [Exit Elfrida.]

O D E.

Cho. The turtle tells her plaintive tale,
 Sequester'd in some shadowy vale;
 The lark in radiant æther flotes,
 And swells his wild extatic notes:
 Meanwhile on yonder hawthorn spray
 The linnet wakes her temp'rate lay;
 She haunts no solitary shade,
 She flutters o'er no sun-shine mead,
 No love-born griefs depress her song,
 No raptures lift it loudly high,
 But soft the trills, amid th' aerial throng,
 Smooth simple strains of sob'rest harmony.

Sweet bird! like thine our lay shall flow,
 Nor gaily loud, nor sadly slow;
 For to thy note sedate, and clear,
 CONTENT still lends a list'ning ear.
 Reclin'd this mossy bank along,
 Oft has she heard thy easy song:
 Why hears not now? what fairer grove
 From *Harewood* lures her devious love?

What

What fairer grove than *Harewood* knows,
 More woodland walks, more fragrant gales,
 More shadowy bowers, inviting soft repose.
 More streams flow-wand'ring thro' her winding vales.

Perhaps to some lone cave the rover flies,
 Where lull'd in pious peace the hermit lies.
 For, scorning oft the gorgeous hall,
 Where banners wave with blazon'd gold,
 There will the meek-ey'd nymph delight to call,
 And with the solemn Seer high converse hold.

There, Goddess, on the shaggy mound,
 Where trembling torrents roar around,
 Where pendant mountains o'er your head
 Stretch their formidable shade;
 You listen, while the holy Seer
 Slowly chaunts his vespers clear;
 Or of his sparing mews partake,
 The fav'ry pulse, the wheaten cake,
 The bev'rage cool of limpid rill.
 Then, rising light, your host you bless,
 And o'er his faintly temples bland distill
 Seraphic day-dreams of heaven's happiness.

Where'er thou art, enchanting maid,
 Thou soon wilt smile in *Harewood's* shade:
 Soon will thy fairy feet be seen,
 Printing this dew impearled green;
 Soon shall we mark thy gestures meek
 Thy glitt'ring eye, and dimpled cheek,
 What time thou seek'st, with willing haste,
 Thy lov'liest throne, *Elfrida's* breast.
 There seated on that iv'ry shrine,
 Where all the Loves and Graces lye,
 With them your hands shall mutual chaplets twine,
 And weave immortal wreaths of peace and joy.

And

And, hark, completing our prophetic strain,
 The fleet hoof rattles o'er the flinty plain ;
 Now nearer, and now nearer sounds.
 Avant ! ye vain, delusive fears.
 Hark ! echo tells thro' *Harewood's* amplest bounds,
 That Love, Content, and *Athelwold* appears.

ATHELWOLD, ELFRIDA, CHORUS.

Athel. Look ever thus ; with that bright glance of joy
 Thus alway meet my transports. Let these arms
 Thus ever fold me ; and this cheek, that blooms
 With all health's op'ning roses, press my lips,
 Warm as at this blest moment.

Elfri. Athelwold,
 I had prepar'd me many a stern rebuke ;
 Had arm'd my brow with frowns, and taught my eye
 Th' averted glance of coldness, which might best
 Greet such a loit'ring lover ; but I find,
 'Twas a vain task ; for this my truant heart
 Forgets each lesson, which resentment taught,
 And in thy sight knows only to be happy.

Athel. My best *Elfrida*—Heav'ns ! it cannot last.
 The giddy height of joy, to which I'm lifted,
 Is as a hanging rock, at whose low foot
 The black and beating surge of infamy
 Rolls ready to receive, and sink my soul.

Elf. So soon to fall into this musing mood——
 I thought, my Lord, you promis'd you would leave
 These cares behind at court. Nay, 'twas the cause
 Assign'd for this my residence at *Harewood*,
 That you might never come to these fond arms,
 But with a breast devoid of public toil,
 And fill'd alone with rapture and *Elfrida*.
 Said you not so ? why then that pensive look,
 That down-cast eye, that settled musing posture ?
 Surely the city's din, and this still forest
 Have lost their diff'rence. Wherefore stay I here ?
 I'll with you to the palace.

Athel. Heav'n forbid !

Elf.

Elf. Nay, my best lord, I mean it but in sport;
 For should you bid me quit these blooming lawns,
 For some bare heath, or drear unpeopled desert;
 Believe me, I would think its wildness Eden,
 If *Athelwold* with frequent visitation
 Endear'd the savage scene: but yet I fear
 My father.

Athel. Hah! why him?

Elf. You know his temper;
 How jealous of his rank, and his trac'd lineage
 From royal ancestry. I fear me much,
 He will not brook you should conceal me long
 In this lone privacy: no, he will deem it
 Far unbecoming her, whose veins are fill'd
 With the rich stream of his nobility.
 Should it be so, his hot and fiery nature,
 I doubt, will blaze, and do some dreadful outrage.

Athel. He need not know it, or, if chance he should,
 It matters not, if so this forest life
 Seem of your own adoption and free choice.
 And that it will so seem, I trust that love,
 Which ever yet has met my wayward will
 With pleas'd compliance, and unask'd assent.

Elf. And ever shall: yet blame me not, my Lord,
 If prying womanhood should prompt a wish
 To learn the cause of this your strange commotion,
 Which ever wakes, if I but drop one thought
 Of quitting *Harewood*.

Athel. Go to the clear surface
 Of yon unruffled lake, and, bending o'er it,
 There read my answer.

Elf. These are riddles, sir——

Athel. No; for its glassy and reflecting surface
 Will smile with charms too tempting for a palace.

Elf. Does *Athelwold* distrust *Elfrida's* faith?

Athel. No: but he much distrusts *Elfrida's* beauty.

Elf. Away: you trifle.

Athel.

Athel. Never more in earnest ;
I would not for the throne which *Edgar* sits on,
That *Edgar* should behold it.

Elf. What my Lord,
Think you the face, that caught your single heart,
Will make all hearts its captives ? vain surmise.
Yet grant it could ; the face is yours alone :
Not *Edgar's* self would dare to seize it from you.
Edgar's a king, and not a tyrant.

Athel. True,
Edgar's a king, a just one ; his firm feet
Walk ever in the fore-right road of honour ;
Nor do I know what lure can draw his steps
Devious from that straight path, save only one :
That tempting lure is beauty. Ah ! *Elfrida*,
Throw but the dazz'ling bait within his view,
The untam'd wolf does not with fiercer rage
Burst the flight bondage of the silken net,
Than he the ties of law. Late, very late,
Smit casually with young *Matilda's* face
He strait commanded her reluctant mother
To yield her to his arms : nor had she 'scap'd
The violating fervour of his love,
Had not the prudent dame suborn'd her handmaid,
To take the unchast office, and be led
Veil'd in the mask of night, to *Edgar's* chamber
A counterfeit *Matilda*. As it chanc'd,
The damsel pleas'd the King, nor did detection
A whit abate his fondness ; he foregave
The prudent mother, eas'd *Matilda's* fears,
And led the wanton minstrel to his court.
Where still she shares —

Cho. Behold, Earl *Athelwold*,
A messenger arrives ; his speed and aspect
Speak some important errand.

EDWIN, ATHELWOLD, ELFRIDA, CHORUS.

Athel. How now, *Edwin* ?

C

Edw.

Edw. The King, my lord, is on his way to *Harewood*.

Atbel. The King!

Edw. His purpose is to pass thro' *Mercia* ;
And in a hasty message, some two hours
After you left the palace, this his pleasure
Was sent you by Lord *Seofrid* ; withal
Commanding your attendance. You being absent,
He straitway turn'd his course thro' this fair forest,
Meaning to chase the stag ; his train is small,
As was his purpose sudden.

Elf. Good my Lord,
Why thus perplex'd ?

Cho. Heav'n's what a deep despair
Sits on his brow ?

Elf. The notice sure is short ;
But that's a trifle, a small train requires
The smaller preparation : let him come.

Atbel. Yes, let him come : so thou wilt say, *Elfrida*,
When thou hast heard my tale. Yes, let him come,
So wilt thou say, and let thy husband perish.
Yet shall these arms once more embrace thee closely,
Ere yet thou fly them as the pois'nous adder.
'Tis o'er : in that embrace *Elfrida*'s love
Was buried ; and in that embrace, the peace
Of wretched *Atbelwold*.

Elf. What may this be !

Atbel. O *Edwin*, *Edwin*, when surviving malice
Shall prey upon the fame of thy dead master,
Wilt thou not someway strive to check the fiend's
Insatiate fury ? wilt thou see my name
Defil'd, and blacken'd with detraction's venom,
And bear it patiently !

Elf. What means my best —

Atbel. Peace ; not a word of best, or lov'd, or dear :
These are not titles now for thee to use,
Or me to triumph in. Virgins, retire :
We would awhile be private. Nay, return,
Concealment would be vain ; and ye and *Edwin*

Are

Are bound to me. *Albina!* as for you,
I sav'd your father, when his blood was forfeit.

Cbo. Not I, great Earl, alone, but all this train
Are bound by ev'ry tye of faith and love
To gen'rous *Athelwold*; to that mild master,
Who never forc'd our service to one act,
But of such liberal sort, as freedom's self
Would smilingly perform.

Athel. It may be so,
But where's the tye, *Elfrida*, that may bind
Thy faith and love?

Elf. The strongest sure, my Lord,
The golden, nuptial tye. Try but its strength.

Athel. I must perforce this instant. Know, *Elfrida*,
Once, on a day of high festivity,
The youthful King, encircled with his nobles,
Crown'd high the spark'ling bowl; and much of love,
Of beauty much the sprightly converse ran.
When, as it well might chance, the brisk Lord *Ardulph*
Made gallant note of *Orgar's* peerless daughter,
And in such phrase as might enflame a breast
More cool than *Edgar's*. Early on the morrow
Th' impatient Monarch gave me swift commission,
To view those charms, of which Lord *Ardulph's* tongue
Had giv'n such warm description: to those words
If my impartial eye gave full assent,
I had his royal mandate on the instant
To hail you Queen of *England*.

Elf. 'Stead of which
You came, and hail'd me wife of *Athelwold*.
Was this the tale I was so taught to fear?
Was this the deed, that known would make me fly
Thy clasping arm, as 'twere the pois'nous adder?
No, let this tender, fond embrace assure thee,
That thy *Elfrida's* love can never die;
Or, if it could, this animating touch
Would soon reawake it into life and rapture.

Athel.

Athel. Dost thou then pardon me? come, injur'd
sovereign,
Plunge deep thy sword of justice in this breast,
And I will die contented.

Elf. Heav'n forbid!
What can be done?

Cho. Indeed, ye constant pair,
'Tis fit ye strive to fly the coming danger.
For safety now sits wav'ring on your love,
Like the light down upon the thistle's beard
Which ev'ry breeze may part. Say, noble Earl,
What feint was us'd to lull the King's impatience?

Athel. Soon as these shades had veil'd my beauteous
bride,

I hasted back to *Edgar*, laugh'd at *Ardulph*,
And talk'd of *Elfrid*, as of vulgar beauties;
Own'd no uncommon light'ning in her eye,
No breast that sham'd the snow, or cheek the rose.
'The sprightly King believ'd me, and forgot her.

Cho. But an alliance, great as *Athelwold's*
With *Orgar's* daughter, soon would blaze abroad,
The theme of popular converse.

Athel. True, it would;
And for that reason, when I last was here,
'The King was taught I went to wed *Elfrida*.

Elf. How so, my Lord?

Athel. Thy father, my *Elfrida*,
Has rich possessions: these and these alone,
I made my theme of love; and told the King,
'That tho' thy face (pardon the impious falsehood)
Boasted not charms to grace a monarch's throne,
Yet would thy dow'r well suit his minister.
I therefore meant to ask thee of thy father,
And (that my want of skill in choice might 'scape
All censure) hide thee close in *Harewood* castle.
Edgar with smiles consented, and, I think,
Harbours no thought of my disloyalty.

Elf. If so, what danger now?

Athel.

Athel. Ask'st thou, what danger?
 'Sdeath, will that glance not instantly proclaim
 My tenfold treachery?

Elf. He shall not see me.
 I'll hide me instant in some secret chamber,
 And robe this Virgin in my bridal vestments.

Athel. Thy love, like balm, runs trick'ling o'er the
 wounds

Of my torn bosom; yet 'tis vain, 'tis vain;
 Thou must thyself appear, for *Ardulph* ever
 Attends the King, and would detect the fraud.

Elf. If so, yet still I can ensure our safety;
 For as you fear my softness of complexion,
 I'll stain it with the juice of dusky leaves,
 Or yellow berries, which this various wood
 From tree to shrub will yield me. These I'll use,
 And form a thousand methods to conceal
 The little gleams of grace, which Nature lent me.
 Fear not my caution.

Athel. Gentlest, best of Creatures,
 Go, do then as thy tender care directs.
 And yet how vain? what wond'rous art can steal
 The liquid lightnings from those radiant eyes,
 Or rob the wavy ringlets of that hair
 Of all their nameless graces; say it could,
 Yet would that modest, but majestic mien,
 That inborn dignity of soul, which breathes
 Thro' each angelic gesture, still remain
 To seize the heart of *Edgar*. Rest, *Elfrida*,
 Rest as thou art, in all that blaze of beauty:
 I must submit to my just lot and lose thee.

Elf. Away, my Lord, with these too anxious
 scruples:
 Fear not my carriage; I will stoop my head,
 Drawl out an idiot phrase, and do each act
 With ev'n a rude and peasant awkwardness.

Edw. Ere this my Lord, I think, the King has reach'd
 The full midway; 'twere fit you stood prepar'd
 To give him meeting.

Athel.

Athel. Give him meeting, *Edwin!*

Alas, I have no mask to veil my baseness.
When deep contrition shadows all my soul,
I cannot dress my features in light smiles,
And look the thing I am not. No, these eyes
Are not as yet true vassals to my purpose,
As yet indeed I am but half a villain.

Elf. You weigh this matter in too nice a balance.
Your crime, my Lord, is but the crime of love :
Thousands like you have fail'd.

Athel. I know, *Elfrida*,
Could love absolve the crime, my soul were pure
As maiden innocence. Yes, I do love thee,
And thou art fair—beyond—But that's my bane ;
Thy ev'ry charm adds weight to my offence,
And heaps fresh wrongs upon the best of Masters.
Yes, *Elfrid*, *Edgar* was the best of Masters.
O hide me from the thought in that dear bosom—
Heavens ! I must die or keep her.

Elf. Live, or die,
I'm thine alike. Death cannot aught abate,
Or life augment, my love. Let this embrace
Be witness of my truth.

Athel. It shall, it shall :
Thy ev'ry word and look declares thee faithful,
Secure of all thy love, and all thy prudence,
Returning confidence has arm'd my soul
For this dread meeting : resting on thy truth
I go—— [Exit *Athelwold*.]

Elf. Go, and thy guardian saint preserve thee,
Show'r blessings vast as would my lavish love,
Had I his power to bless thee !

Cho. Yes, my Sisters,
The silent awe that reigns thro' all your train,
Befits ye well. Let no unhallow'd tongue
Dare to profane her virtue by its praise.
'Tis a bright prodigy, which admiration
Must stand in silent gaze at, and behold
Full-plum'd perfection take its eagle flight

Above

Above ambition, sov'reignty, and pride ;

Above——

Elf. What could ambition to a heart
So fill'd with love as mine ? if my late act
Had aught of noble and superior grace,
Impute it all to love, to virtuous love,
Than which what passion more impels the mind
To fair and gen'rous action ? but the hours
Are precious now. I'll to yon neighb'ring grove :
There grows an azure flow'r, I oft have mark'd it,
Which stains the pressing finger, with a juice
Of dusky, yellow tinct : its name I know not.
I'll fetch and try it strait. Wait my return.

[*Exit Elfrida,*

C H O R U S.

O D E.

Whence does this sudden lustre rise,
That gilds the grove : not like the noontide beam
Which sparkling dances on the trembling stream,
Nor the blue lightning's flash swift-shooting thro' the
skies ;

But such a solemn steady light,
As o'er the cloudless azure steals,
When *Cynthia* riding on the brow of night,
Stops in their mid career her silver wheels ?

Whence can it rise, but from the sober pow'r
Of *CONSTANCY* ? She, heav'n-born Queen
Descends, and in this woodbine-vested bower

Fixes her stedfast reign :
Stedfast, as when her high command
Gives to the starry band
Their radiant stations in heav'n's ample plain :
Stedfast, as when around this nether sphere,
She winds the purple year,
Tells what time the snow-drop cold
Its maiden whiteness may unfold,

When

When the golden harvest bend,
 When the ruddy fruits descend;
 Then bids pale winter wake, to pour
 The pearly hail's translucent show'r,
 To cast his silv'ry mantle o'er the woods,
 And bind in crystal chains the slumb'ring floods.

The soul, which she inspires, has pow'r to climb
 To all the heights sublime
 Of Virtue's tow'ring hill:
 That hill, at whose low foot weak-warbling strays
 The scanty stream of human praise,
 A shallow trickling rill;
 While on the summits hov'ring angels shed,
 From their blest pinions, the nectareous dew
 Of rich immortal fame: from these the Muse
 Oft steals some precious drops, and skilful blends
 With those the lower fountain lends;
 Then show'rs it all on some high-favor'd head.
 But thou, *Elfrida*, claim'st the genuine dew;
 Thy worth demands it all,
 Pure, and unmixt on thee the sacred drops shall fall.
Elfrida returns with flowers.

ELFRIDA, ORGAR, CHORUS.

Elf. [*looking on the flower.*] 'Tis strange, my Virgins,
 this sweet child of summer,
 Silken and soft, whose breath perfumes the air,
 Whose gay vest paints the morn, should in its bosom
 Hide such pollution? yet 'tis often thus:
 All are not as they seem.

Or. Yet hear me, Lady.

Elf. Be gone, unmanner'd stranger, nor pursue me;
 Hence, from the grove. Know ye this pilgrim, Virgins?
 On my return I met him here.

Cho. Alas;

He came at break of day, and told a tale,

That

That mov'd our pity—But I fear me now,
 'Twas false; some spy per chance, and may have
 heard——

Or. I have; yet not for that are you betray'd.
 Fair Excellence, my heart is bound unto you,
 I feel a tender interest in your welfare,
 Tender as fathers feel.

Elf. As fathers feel;
 That well-known voice, and ah! that look——
Or. Elfrida!

Elf. Yes, it is he, it is my father, Virgins.
 Support me, or I faint! O wherefore, Sir?——

Or. Take courage, daughter; my parental fondness
 Prompted this visit. Thus I came disguis'd,
 To learn the cause of my dear child's confinement:
 And I have learnt it.

Elf. Then all's lost for ever.

Or. Thou know'st, *Elfrida*, next my house's honour,
 Thy peace has ever been my dearest care.
 But such an insult——No: I cannot brook it.
 So black a fraud! By all my ancestors,
 By *Offa's* shade, I will have ample vengeance.

Elf. Alas, I know too well your dreadful purpose.
 I knew it at the first. Yes, he must fall.
 Yet pardon me, if my poor trembling heart
 Puts up I know not what of pray'rs and vows
 To ev'ry pitying faint. Celestial Guardians
 Of nuptial constancy! O bend from heav'n
 Your star-crown'd heads, and hear a wretched woman,
 That begs ye save, from a dread father's rage,
 Her lord her husband.

Or. Husband! 'Sdeath, what husband?
 Is *Athelwold* thy husband? Sooner call
 Th' impeached thief true master of the booty
 He stole, or murder'd for. Disdain the villain;
 And help me to revenge thee.

Gbo. Think, great Earl,
 What sanctimonious ties restrain your daughter.
 Did she not swear before the hallow'd shrine

Eternal fealty to this her Lord ?
 Yet say, that he deceiv'd her ; shall her truth
 Dare to revenge ? No, Sir, in highest heav'n
 Vengeance 'mid storms and tempests sits enshrin'd,
 Vested in robes of light'ning, and there sleeps,
 Unwak'd but by th' incens'd Almighty's call.
 O ! let not man presume to take unbid
 That dread vicegerency,

Or. Peace, Virgins, peace,
 The saws of Druids, or the chaunt of Bards,
 Have little weight with me, when insults high
 Rouse my just indignation. Hear me, daughter,
 You went to search for flow'rs, to blot your charms
 With their dun hue. Yes, you may search for flow'rs,
 Yet shall they be the loveliest of the spring ;
 Flow'rs, that entangling in your auburn hair,
 Or blushing 'mid the whiteness of your bosom,
 May, to the power of ev'ry native grace,
 Give double life and lustre. Haste, my child,
 Array thyself in thy most gorgeous garb,
 And see each jewel, which my love procur'd thee,
 Dart its full radiance. More than all, put on
 The nobler ornament of winning smiles,
 And kind inviting glances.

Elf. Never, never ;
 When this true heart renounces *Athelwold*,
 May equitable heav'n——

Or. Nay, swear not, *Elfrida* ;
 But with a duteous, and attentive ear,
 Listen to my persuasions. Much I wish
 Persuasions might prevail, that not compell'd
 To use a father's just prerogative,
 My will may meet with thy unforc'd obedience,
 Follow me, on thy duty.

Elf. Cruel father,
 That duty shall obey you ; I will follow :
 Yet not to quit my love. So mercy shield me,
 As I hold true to *Athelwold* !

[*Exeunt* Orgar and *Elfrida*.
Semichorus]

Semichio. Horror ! horror !

The pen of fate dipt in it's deepest gall,
Perhaps on the ill-omen'd wall,
Now writes th' event of this tremendous day.
O ! that our weaker sight
Could read the mystic characters, and spy
What to the unpurg'd, mortal eye,
Is hid in endless night.

Semichio. Suspense ! thou frozen guest, be gone.
The wretch, whose rugged bed
Is lin'd with thorns, more softly rests his head,
Than he who sinks amid the cymet's down,
If thou, tormenting fiend ! be nigh,
To prompt his starting tear, his ceaseless sigh,
His wish, his pray'r, his vow for ling'ring certainty.

Cho. But hark ! that certainty arrives. Methought
I heard the winding horn. I did not err ;
The King is near at hand. This quick approach
Will sure prevent this proud Earl's cruel purpose.
Yet what of that ? Does her fair form require
The blazon of rich vesture ? Genuine beauty
Nor asks, nor needs it : negligence alone
Is its bright diadem, and artless ease
Its robe of *Tyrian* tincture. Say, my sisters,
Shall we salute this monarch with a hymn
Of festival and joy ! Alas, such joy
Ill suits our trembling hearts, and weeping eyes.
And now 'twere vain ; for see, the King approaches.

EDGAR, ATHELWOLD, CHORUS.

Edg. No, *Athelwold* ; not from a partial blindness,
Or from the mode and guise of courtesy,
Are we thus large in praise ; in our true judgment,
This castle is not more kind Nature's debtor
For this its happy site, than 'tis to thee
For that just symmetry, and modest skill
Which decks the gen'ral structure. Not a frieze,
Or moulded pediment, but in its parts
Claims kindred with the whole ; for ornament

Is here the offspring of necessity,
Not the vain flourish of unmeaning art.

[*Seeing the Chorus.*]

But ah! what nobler beauties catch mine eye?
Thy castle's beauty, my lov'd *Athelwold*,
Has amplest proof, in having pow'r to hold
Mine eye from such a prospect. Pardon, fair ones;
To take your graces thus at second note
Was sure uncommon blindness.

Athel. Heav'ns! they weep.

What may this mean? Some dread and unseen chance
Has counterwork'd my safety.

Edg. Whence this silence;

Why are your lovely heads thus bow'd with sadness?
Beshrew my heart, my Lords, but this is strange.
I know thee, Earl, and know thy gentleness,
More prone to obey, than lord it o'er the sex;
Else should I guess this sorrow had its rise,
From some discourteous treatment.

Cho. No, dread Sov'reign;

He is the noblest, gentlest, best of masters;
And may your love reward——

ORGAR, ATHELWOLD, EDGAR, CHORUS.

Athel. Death to my hopes!

Org. Yes, villain, start; but let this vengeful arm
Arrest thy baseness; would to heav'n its strength
Thus grasping thee, could open thy false breast,
And bare thy heart to the sham'd eye of day.

Edg. Patience, hot man. What art thou?

Or. I am *Orgar*——

Pardon me, Prince; that this my honest rage
O'erleaps obedient duty. I am wrong'd,
Yet that's but small; 'tis not my private wrongs,
But yours, much-injur'd Prince, that call for justice.
Yes, Sir, I here, on a true subject's oath,
Proclaim Earl *Athelwold* a faithless traitor.

Edg. Ha! what is this? Renounce the word, old
Earl;

Thy

Thy length of years hath forc'd thee, sure, to press
 The verge of dotage. *Athelwold!* what *Athelwold*
 A faithless traitor! perish the suspicion.
 Never before did word, or thought, or look,
 Give doubt of his distinguish'd loyalty.
 Dotage alone could frame the accusation.

Org. I do not dote, thank heav'n, my faculties
 Are yet my own, unblemish'd and unhurt.
 Would so my daughter were!

Edg. What is his drift?

Athel. Better, my royal Lord, you mark'd him not;
 The wayward Earl is——

Org. What, audacious villain!
 I will be heard.

Edg. Go to, thou choleric Lord.

Org. When thou hast heard me, King, then call me
 choleric.

Edg. Speak then, and briefly.

Org. Once, my sacred Liege,
 I had a daughter, duteous as e'er crown'd
 A father's wish, and lovely as could warm
 A youth to am'rous transports. This, my Lord,
 You learn'd long since from noble *Ardulph's* praises,
 And fired with his description, sent this Earl,
 This faithful Earl, t'invite her to your throne.

Edg. No, *Orgar*, not t'invite her to our throne,
 Simply to note her beauty was his errand.

Org. Yes, he did note it, stamp'd it for his own.
 But why this parly? Enter, Sir, these gates,
 And let *Elfrida's* features be the book,
 Where you may read the story of his falshood,
 Ev'n at one glance.

Edg. Lead on then, noble Lord.
 We'll follow to the trial. I will humour
 The Earl's hot temper. He has heard, my friend,
 We meant t'exalt his daughter, and for that,
 His partial fondness, link'd with his ambition,
 Levels this rage at thee. Attend us, lords.

[*Exeunt* Edgar, *Orgar*, &c.
 CHORUS,

CHORUS, ATHELWOLD.

Cho. My Lord, the King is enter'd : stand not thus
In statue-like distress.

Athel. Away, away ;

What ! can a man that thinks such thoughts as I do
Have pow'r of act, and motion ? Speak to me ;
Inform me all. What said she, when I left her ?
How came her father hither ? how did she
Greet his arrival ? Say, was she compell'd,
Or did her free and voluntary voice,
Tell all the story ? Did she marshal him,
To this his deed of vengeance ?

Cho. Dearest Master ;

Elfrida told him not : his own deceit
Was his informer. Here the Earl arrived
Early at morn, in mean and pilgrim weeds,
All like an antient, toil-worn traveller ;
And with a tale told in such piteous strain,
Fraught with such sad and moving circumstance,
With woes so well-dissembled ; that our softness,
Suffer'd him t'enter this close bow'r for rest,
Which he adapting to his prying purpose,
Thence learnt the secret. This our disobedience,
We own——

Athel. Was my perdition, yet 'tis well ;
I blame ye not ; it was the work of Fate.
Fate brought him hither, Fate annull'd your faith.
I do not think you purpos'd my destruction ;
But yet you have destroy'd me. O *Elfrida*,
And art thou faithful ? This my jealous eye
Thought it had mark'd some spect of change upon
thee ;

Thought it had found, what might have made thy loss
Somewhat within endurance. 'Tis not so ;
And this thy purity but serves t'augment
The sum of my distractions. Meet me, *Edgar*,
With thy rais'd sword : be merciful and sudden——

[*Exit Athelwold.*

CHORUS.

CHORUS.

O D E.

Say, will no white-rob'd son of light,
 Swift-darting from his heav'nly height,
 Here deign to take his hallow'd stand ;
 Here wave his amber locks, unfold
 His pinions cloth'd with downy gold ;
 Here smiling stretch his tutelary wand ?
 And you, ye host of saints, for ye have known
 Each dreary path in life's perplexing maze,
 Tho' now ye circle yon eternal throne
 With harpings high of inexpressive praise,
 Will not your train descend in radiant state,
 To break with mercy's beam this gathering cloud of
 fate ?

'Tis silence all. No son of light
 Darts swiftly from his heav'nly height,
 No train of radiant saints descend.
 " Mortals, in vain ye hope to find,
 " If guilt, if fraud has stain'd your mind,
 " Or saint to hear, or angel to defend."
 So TRUTH proclaims. I hear the sacred sound
 Burst from the centre of her burning throne.
 Where aye she sits with star-wreath'd lustre
 crown'd,
 A bright sun clasps her adamant zone.
 So TRUTH proclaims ; her awful voice I hear,
 With many a solemn pause it slowly meets my ear.

" Attend, ye sons of men ; attend, and say,"
 Does not enough of my refulgent ray
 Break thro' the veil of your mortality !
 Say, does not reason in this form descry
 Unnumber'd, nameless glories, that surpass
 The angel's floating pomp, the seraph's glowing
 grace ?

Shall

Shall then your earth-born daughters vie
 With me? Shall she, whose brightest eye
 But emulates the diamond's blaze
 Whose cheek but mocks the peaches bloom,
 Whose breath the hyacinths perfume,
 Whose melting voice the warbling woodlark's lays:
 Shall she be deem'd my rival? Shall a form
 Of elemental drops, of mould'ring clay,
 Vie with these charms imperial? The poor worm
 Shall prove her contest vain. Life's little day
 Shall pass, and she is gone: while I appear,
 Flush'd with the bloom of youth thro' heav'n's eter-
 nal year.

Know, mortals, know; ere first ye sprung,
 Ere first these orbs in æther hung,
 I shone amid the heav'nly throng.
 These eyes beheld creation's day,
 This voice began the choral lay,
 And taught archangels their triumphant song.
 Pleas'd I survey'd bright Nature's gradual birth,
 Saw infant light with kindling lustre spread,
 Soft vernal fragrance clothe the flow'ring earth,
 And Ocean heave on his extended bed;
 Saw the tall pine aspiring pierce the sky,
 The tawny lion stalk, the rapid eagle fly.

Last, man arose, erect in youthful grace,
 Heav'n's hallow'd image stamp'd upon his face,
 And, as he rose, the high behest was giv'n
 "That I alone of all the host of heav'n,
 "Should reign protectress of the godlike youth."
 Thus the Almighty spake: he spake and call'd me
 TRUTH.

ATHELWOLD, EDWIN, CHORUS.

Athel. Banish me! No. I'll die. For why should
 life

Remain a lonely lodger in that breast

Which

Which honour leaves untenanted. Vain breath !
 Thou ill can'st fill such vacancy. Be gone.
 This sword shall free——

Cbo. O shame to Fortitude !

Shame to that manly passion, which inspires
 Its vig'rous warmth, when the bleak blasts of fate
 Would chill the soul. O call the ready Virtue
 Quick to thy aid, for she is ever near thee,
 Is ever prompt to spread her sevenfold shield
 O'er noble breasts.

Athel. And but o'er noble breasts ;
 Not o'er the breast which livid infamy
 Indelibly has spotted. O shame, shame.
 Sword ! rid me of the thought.

Cbo. Forbear, forbear !

Think what a sea of deep perdition whelms
 The wretch's trembling soul, who launches forth
 Unlicens'd to eternity. Think, think,
 And let the thought restrain thy impious hand.
 The race of man is one vast, marshal'd army
 Summon'd to pass the spacious realms of time ;
 Their leader the Almighty. In that march
 Ah who may quit his post ? when high in air
 The chos'n Archangel rides, whose right hand wields
 Th'imperial standard of heav'n's providence,
 Which dreadly sweeping thro' the vaulted sky
 O'ershadows all creation.

Athel. I was once——

Yes, I was once (I have his royal word for't)
 A man of such try'd faith, such steady honour,
 As mock'd all doubt and scruple.—What a change !
 Now must that unstain'd, virgin character,
 Be doom'd to gross and hourly prostitution
 Sating the lust of slander ; and my wife,
 My chaste *Elfrida* ! O distraction, no,
 I'll fly to save her.

Edw. Stay, my dearest Master
 You rush on instant death.

E

Athel.

Athel. I mean it, slave,
And would'st thou hinder me?

Edw. Yes, Sir, I hold
'Tis duty to my King, and love to you,
Thus to oppose your entrance.

Athel. What, thou traitor!
Thy pardon, *Edwin*, I forgot myself;
Forgot, that I stood here a banish'd man,
And that this gate was shut against its master.
And yet this gate leads to my dear *Elfrida*,
Can it be barr'd to me? O earth, cold earth,
Upon whose breast I cast this load of mis'ry,
Bear it a while; and you ye aged oaks,
Ye venerable fathers of this wood,
Who oft have cool'd beneath your arching shades
My humble ancestors, oft seen them hie
To your spread umbrage, from yon sultry field,
Their scene of honest labour. Shade, ah! shade,
The last, the wretchedest of all their race.
I will not long pollute ye, for I mean
To pay beneath your consecrated gloom
A sacrifice to honour, and the ghosts
Of those progenitors, who sternly frown
On me their base descendant.

Edw. See, ye Virgins
How horror shades his brow; how fixt his eye;
Heav'n's! what despair——

Cho. Edwin, 'tis ever thus
With noble minds, if chance they slide to folly;
Remorse stings deeper, and relentless conscience
Pours more of gall into the bitter cup
Of their severe repentance.

Athel. 'Tis resolv'd,
I'll enter and demand a second audience.
And yet how vain? ere I can reach his ear,
His ready train will stop me, and with all
The cruel punctuality of office,
So prompt to act 'gainst fallen favourites,

Dismiss me with reproof.—Surely I heard her.
Was't not *Elfrida's* voice? 'Tis she herself.

ELFRIDA, EDGAR, ATHELWOLD, ORGAR,
CHORUS.

Elf. No, I will once more clasp him to my bosom.
I will not be with-held. I will o'ertake him,
Will follow him to exile. Hah, my husband!
So quickly found? They thought to tear me from thee,
But we will part no more.

Edg. Take heed, *Elfrida*,
This ill-tim'd fondness may recal the fate
I just now freed him from; who loves like me
Can ill brook this. Or quit him, or he dies.

Abel. Yes, let me die! Death is my dearest wish.
Quit me, *Elfrida*! leave me to my fate.
'Tis just, 'tis just. Thus to my sov'reign's sword
Freely I bare my breast. Strike, injur'd Prince;
But do not banish me.

Elf. What, *Athelwold*,
Is then the life, on whose dear preservation
Elfrida's peace depends, not worth the saving?
Die then. But ere thy murd'rer strikes the stroke,
Let me inform him, that his act destroys
No single life.

Edg. By heav'n, she loves the traitor
Beyond all hope of change——

Elf. No, *Athelwold*,
Thou shalt not die. That pause in royal *Edgar*
Bespeaks calm recollection and weigh'd thought,
And his relenting tongue shall quickly seal
Thy lib'ral pardon. Come, my Lord, let's kneel;
Now's the blest time; here let us kneel together,
And as these streaming eyes and lifted hands
Employ each act of silent supplication,
Do thou recount——Ah! no, thy modest tongue
Could never tell ev'n half the gallant story.
Be silent then. Let *Edgar's* self reflect,
For well I know his mem'ry writes thy virtues

Upon

Upon its fairest page. Yes, let him weigh
All thy past deeds of loyalty and faith,
'Gainst this so light a fault.

Edg. So light a fault!

Had he dislodg'd my richest coffer'd treasures,
Dispers'd sedition's poison 'mid my troops,
Or aim'd with daring and rebellious hand
To snatch these regal honours from my brow,
I sooner could have pardon'd.

Athel. Cease, *Elfrida*.

My doom is just—Yes, royal Sir, I'll go
To banishment. I do deserve to breathe,
Deserve to bear this load of life about me,
For many years to lengthen out my age,
List'ning the hourly knell of curs'd remembrance,
Whose leaden stroke shall tell to my sad soul
That I was faithful once.

Elf. O flinty *Edgar*,

What! will this penitence not move thee? know
There is a rose-lip'd Seraph sits on high,
Who ever bends his holy ear to earth
To mark the voice of Penitence, to catch
Her solemn sighs, to tune them to his harp,
And echo them in harmonies divine
Up to the throne of grace. Ev'n heav'n is won
By penitence, and shall heav'n's substitute,
Shall *Edgar* scorn—

Edg. Cease, cease, thou beauteous pleader!
Ah far too beauteous! Wouldst thou gain thy suit,
Why glows that vermeil lip? why rolls that eye
Bright as the ray of morn? why in each gesture
Such unexpressive graces? why, but because
They're native all, and will not be conceal'd.
Else sure each charm betrays him, and becomes
An advocate, whose silent eloquence
Pleads 'gainst thy voice, and foils its tuneful power.
Traitor! was this the face which thy false tongue
Prophan'd as vulgar? this such common beauty
As the fair eye of Day beheld each hour

In ev'ry clime he lighted ? base dissembler,
This instant quit our realm.

Elf. O stay thee, *Edgar*,
And once more hear me. At thy feet I fall
As earnest, and distressed a suppliant,
As e'er embrac'd the knees of majesty.
O spare thy country's guardian, *Edgar*, spare
Thy closest, surest friend. Let not one fault,
Cancel his thousand, thousand acts of faith.
Alas ! I fall to vainest repetition.
Grief, whelming grief drowns all my faculties
And leaves me nought but tears.

Edg. Rise, rise, *Elfrida*.

Elf. Shall he then live ?

Edg. He shall, he shall, my Fair.

If so he quit the realm within the space
Our sentence limited.

Elf. O stop not there ;
That sentence will be death to *Athelwold*.
Think, for thou know'st full well his gentle nature,
Can he, support the rigour of this doom ?
Can he, who liv'd but in thy gracious smiles,
Who'd pine, if chance those smiles a single hour
Were dealt him thriftily ; think, can he bear
The infamy of exile ?

Edg. Hear me, *Athelwold*.
Did I not show'r on thy much-favour'd head
My thickest honours, and with gift so ready
As out run all request ? Did I not hold thee
Still in such open confidence of friendship
Such love as——

Athel. Sooner stab me than repeat it.

Edg. Yet give me hearing. I repeat not this
To taunt, or gall thee. On my soul thy worth
Did o'ertop all those honours, and thy zeal
Kept pace with my best love. Nor till this deed——
But such a deed ! look there, look on that face.
Thou know'st me, *Athelwold*, hast seen me gaze
On a soft yielding fair one, till mine eye

Shot

Shot flames. Perdition seize me, Earl,
If I knew love till now.

Athel. I see it plainly,
Nor say I aught to lessen my offence.
No, here I kneel. Oh! cast but on my mis'ry
One kind forgiving glance; this ready sword
Shall expiate all.

Elf. Ah! will you? must he die?

Edg. No, slay thee, *Athelwold*, and sheath thy sword,
I never yet (save but this hour of rage)
Deem'd thee my subject. Thou wert still my friend,
And, injur'd as I am, thou still art such:
I do forego the word; to banish thee
Or seal thy death, transcends a friend's just right.

Elf. It does, it does, surpassing goodness. Virgins,
The King will pardon him. Wake each high note
Of praise, and gratitude, teach *Edgar's* name
To *Harewood's* furthest echo. O my Sov'reign!
What words can speak—

Edg. Ah, check these transports, Lady,
Lest, if I see thee thus, my soul forget
Its fair resolve. I'll leave thee on the instant.
Yet first my lips must press this gentle hand,
And breathe one soft sigh of no common fervor.
Now on, my Lords—Fair wonder of thy sex,
Adieu. We'll strait unto our realm of *Mercia*.
Yet first, as was our purpose, thro' this forest,
We'll chace the nimble Roebuck; may the sport
More please us, than we hope. Earl *Athelwold*,
Thou too must join our train. Follow us straight.

Exit Edgar, &c.

Athel. I do, my Liege. *Elfrida*, I have much
For thy lov'd ear, and have but one farewell
To tell it all—And yet—

Elf. Ah loiter not,
It may enrage. Farewel. Be sure, take heed
I come not in your talk, avoid ev'n thinking.

Check

Check ev'n the sighs of absence. Haste, my Earl,
Oh haste thee, as thou lov'st thy constant wife.

Exit Athelwold.

ORGAR, ELFRIDA, CHORUS.

Org. Thy constant wife! ah, stain of all thy race,
Degen'rate Girl! Henceforth be *Orgar* deem'd
Of soft, and dove-like temper, who could see
A child of his stoop to such vile abasement,
And yet forbore just wrath; forbore to draw
That blood she had defil'd from her mean veins.
But sure thou art not mine, some Elve or Faye
Did spirit away my babe, and by curst charms
Thee in her cradle plac'd. Nay hang not on me.
Dry, dry thy tears, they've done their office amply.
Edgar has pardon'd him. No, by my earldom
I cannot think of majesty thus meanly.
He'll yet avenge it: what if chance he should not?
That stops not me; I have a heart, an arm,
A sword can do me justice.

Elf. Ah! my Lord.

Are you still merciless? alas, I hop'd——

Org. What could'st thou hope, *Elfrida*? could'st
thou think

I e'er would pardon his vile perfidy,
Or thy ignoble softness?

Elf. Dearest father,

Frown not thus sternly on me. I would fain
Touch your, relenting soul, fain win your heart
To fatherly forgiveness, For thro' life
I've oft had pleasing proof how that forgiveness
Stoop'd to my fond persuasion. But I fear
Persuasion now has left me. My sad thoughts
Are all on wing, all following *Athelwold*,
Like unseen ministring spirits:—Pardon, Sir,
That frown shall check me, I'll not mention him;
I will but plead for my own weakness, plead
For that soft sympathy of soul, which you
Deem base and servile. Base perhaps it might be.

Were

Were I of bolder sex. But I, alas!——
 Ah pardon me, if Nature stamp't me woman;
 Gave me a heart soft, gentle, prone to pity,
 And very fearful. Fearful, sure with cause
 At this dread hour, when if one hapless word,
 One sigh break forth unbidden, it may wake
 The Monarch's rage—What has my phrenzy said?
 I've wander'd from my meaning. Dearest Virgins,
 My rash tongue more inflames him. O assist me,
 Ye are not thus oppress'd with inward horror:
 Kneel, plead, persuade, convince——

Cho. Alas, my Mistress,
 What may a servant's accents do t'appease
 This furious Earl?

Org. Ye well may spare them: Maidens,
 Know my firm soul's resolv'd, and be my heart
 Abjeet as *Athelwold's*, if I forego
 Its honest resolution. Yes, I'll wait
 The Earl's return, and in his own domain,
 Give him fair combat. I have known the time
 When this good arm had hardihood enough
 For thrice his prowess. What is lost thro' age,
 My just cause shall supply; and he shall fall
 As did the traitor *Oswald*, whose false tongue
 Defam'd me to King *Athelstan*: to the ground
 My sharp lance nail'd the caitiff. [Exit Orgar.]

ELFRIDA, CHORUS.

Elf. Think, my Lord,
 Will *Athelwold*, will he enter those lists,
 Where conquest would be parricide? alas,
 He hears me not. Oh, thou obdurate man!
 A daughter's tears will but the more provoke thee.
 I will not follow him. No, poor *Elfrida*!
 All thou canst do is here to stand, and weep,
 And feel that thou art wretched.

Cho. Dearest Mistress,
 Restrain this flood of tears, perhaps——

Elf.

Elf. Perhaps!

Ah! mock me not with hopes.

Cho. We do not mean it:

For hope, tho' 'tis pale sorrow's only cordial,
Has yet a dull and opiate quality;
Enfeebling what it lulls. It suits not you,
For, as we fear——

Elf. Do you too fear? alas!

I flatter'd my poor soul that all its fears
Were grief's distemper'd coinage, that my Love
Rais'd causeless apprehensions, and at length
Edgar would quite forgive. I do bethink me,
My joy broke forth too rashly. When they left us,
His safety was not half secur'd; my pleading
Was not half heard; I should have follow'd *Edgar*,
Claim'd more full pardon, forc'd him to embrace
My sorrowing lord.

Cho. We fear that sorrow more

Than *Edgar's* rage. We fear his fallen virtue.
Self-condemnation works most strongly on him,
Ev'n to despondency. Nay, at his pardon,
No joy flush'd on his cheek; we mark'd him well,
He shew'd no sign of welcome. No, he took it
As who should say, "To give me aught but death
"Is a poor boon unwish'd and unaccepted."
Too much we fear he'll do some impious act—

Elf. What, on his life? I thought I had explor'd
Each various face of danger: this escap'd me.
How mist I this? It suits his courage highly;
Suits too his fix'd remorse.—But yet he will not,
No, *Athelwold*, thou wilt not kill *Elfrida*.

Cho. O may his love preserve him: may these shades
Receive him soon in peace. To this blest end
You sure should strive to calm your father's rage,
At least not suffer him, as now, retir'd
To brood o'er his revenge. For know, *Elfrida*,
Beneath the silent gloom of solitude
Tho' Peace can sit and smile; tho' meek Content
Can keep the chearful tenor of her soul,

Ev'n in the loneliest shades ; yet let not Wrath
Approach, let black Revenge keep far aloof
Or soon they flame to madness.

Elf. True my Virgins ;
Attend me then : I'll try each winning art,
(Tho' ill such art becomes me) yet I'll aim it.—
Hark—whence that noise? I heard some hasty footsteps.

Cho. O heav'ns ! 'tis *Edwin*.

ELFRIDA, EDWIN, CHORUS.

Elf. Edwin, ah! that look
Bespeaks too well the horror of thy errand.
Tell it me all.

Edw. Alas !——

Elf. Nay, do not pause.
Tell it me all. I think it will not kill me.
Repeat each circumstance. I'm ready, *Edwin*,
Ev'n for the worst.

Edw. Then hear that worst, *Elfrida*.
Soon as the stag had left yon westward thicket,
The King dismiss'd his lords, each sev'ral ways,
To their best sport, bidding Earl *Athelwold*,
Lord *Ardulph*, and myself, attend his person.
Thus parted from the rest, the Monarch pierc'd
A darkling dell, which open'd in a lawn
Thick set with elm around. Suddenly here
He turn'd his steed; and cry'd, " This place befits
" Our purpose well."

Elf. Purpose ! what purpose, *Edwin* ?

'Twas predetermin'd then, dissembling Tyrant!
How could I trust or hope—

Edw. Yet give me hearing ;
Thus with a grave composure, and calm eye
King *Edgar* spoke. Now hear me, *Athelwold*,
Thy King has pardon'd this thy trait'rous act ;
From each committed sin 'gainst majesty
Thou stand'st full franchis'd ; yet there still remains
Somewhat to cancel more. As man to man,
As friend to friend, now, *Athelwold*, I call thee

Strait

Strait to defend thy life with thy good sword.
 Nay, answer not; defend it gallantly.
 If thy arm prosper, this my dying tongue
 Shall pardon thee, and bless thee. If thou fall'st,
 Thy parting breath must to my right resign
Elfrida's beauties. At the word, both drew,
 Both fought, but *Athelwold's* was ill-play'd passion.
 He aim'd his falchion at the Monarch's head,
 Only to leave his own brave breast defenceless.
 And the first stroke of *Edgar's* rapid sword
 Pierc'd my dear master's heart. He fell to earth,
 And falling, cry'd, "This wound atones for all."
 "*Edgar* thus full aveng'd will pardon me,
 "And my true wife with chaste, connubial tears,
 "Embalm my memory." He smil'd, and dy'd.
Elf. Nay, come not round me, Virgins, nor support
 me.

I do not swoon, nor weep. I call not heav'n
 T'avenge my wretchedness. I do not wish
 This Tyrant's hand may wither with cold palsies.
 No, I am very patient. Heav'n is just!
 And, when the measure of his crimes is full,
 Will bare its red right arm, and launce its lightnings.
 Till then, ye elements, rest: and thou, firm earth,
 Ope not thy yawning jaws, but let this monster
 Stalk his due time on thine affrighted surface.
 Yes; let him still go on; still execute
 His savage purposes, and daily make
 More widows weep, as I do. Foolish eyes!
 Why flow ye thus unbidden? what have tears
 To do with grief like mine?

Cho. Help, help, my Sisters,
 To bear her to the castle.

ORGAR, ELFRIDA, EDWIN, CHORUS.

Org. As I pass
 Methought I heard a sound of loud lament,
Elfrida, ha!

Elf.

Elf. Is not my father there?
 Withhold me not, I'll fall at his dear feet.
 O Sir! behold your child thus lowly prostrate;
 Avenge her wrongs, avenge your poor *Elfrida*,
 Your helpless widow'd daughter.

Or. Widow'd daughter!
 What, is he slain?

Elf. Inhospitalably butcher'd;
 The Tyrant's savage self——Stand you thus cool?
 Where is the *Saxon* spirit, where the fire
 Of *Offa's* race?——O foolishness of grief!
 Alas, I had forgot; had *Edgar* spar'd him,
 That sword, to which my madness call'd for vengeance,

Ere long was meant to do the bloody deed,
 And make the murder parricide. Have I
 No friend to do me right?

Or. Thou hast, my child;
 I am thy friend, thy father. Trust my care.
Edwin, a word. Retire, my dearest daughter:
 Virgins, conduct her in.

Elf. My father, No.
 What do you do? I must not be withheld.
 I'll go to yon dire grove, and clasp my husband,
 My murder'd husband. Why restrain me, Sir?
 Can my sad eye dart fire thro' his cold breast,
 And light up life anew?

Or. Go in, my child,
 And seek Tranquillity.

Elf. And seek Tranquillity!
 Ah! who will lead me to her darkling cell?
 I know her now, she is death's pale-ey'd sister,
 Her mansion is the murky charnel vault,
 Whence oft at midnight by the moon's pale gleam
 She sees the neighb'ring Sexton with his spade
 Upturn the green sward, delving the dank grave
 Of some love-stricken maid Yes, lead me thither.

Cho. This way, my dearest mistress.

Elf.

Elf. Hold, nay, hold ;
 Croud not around me. Let me pause a while.
Albina, thou alone shalt join my mis'ry ;
 I've much to utter to thy friendly ear.
 Lead on thou gentle maid ; thy single arm
 Shall prop my trembling frame, thy single voice
 Speak peace to my afflictions.

[*Exit with the principal Virgins.*]

ORGAR, EDWIN, SEMICHORUS.

Or. On your lives,
 Virgins, let no disturbing step approach her.
 Say, *Edwin* (for I guess 'twas you that brought
 These tidings hither) where was royal *Edgar*,
 When late you left him ?

Edw. At my master's side,
 Repentant of the stroke.

Or. Comes he not back
 To *Harewood* ?

Semicho. Heav'n forbid ! *Elfrida's* brain
 Would madden at the sight.

Or. Mistake not, Virgins ;
 I did not mean, at this distressful hour,
 The King should see my daughter.

Semicho. No, for pity,
 Do not profane this sabbath of her grief,
 O be her sorrow sacred !

Or. Fear not, Virgins,
 Her peace is my best care, and, to ensure it,
 I'll hast this instant, by young *Edwin's* guidance,
 To find the Monarch. Some four miles from *Hare-*
wood

Stands old Earl *Egbert's* castle, my fast friend.
 With him will I persuade the King to sojourn,
 Till my child's grief abate, that too to speed
 Be it your business, Virgins. Watching ever
 Each happy interval, when your soft tongues
 May hint his praises, till, by practice won,
 She bear their fuller blazon. *Elfrid's* welfare

Requires

Requires this friendly office at your hands ;
 And *Edgar's* virtues bear such genuine lustre
 That Truth itself directs—— [Exit *Orgar*.]

Semicho. As Truth directs,
 So only shall we act. This day has shewn
 What dire effects await its violation.
 Strait is the road of Truth, and plain,
 And tho' across the sacred way
 Ten thousand false meanders stray,
 'Tis our's to walk direct,
 And, with sage caution circumspect,
 Pace slowly thro' the solemn scene.

[*The principal Virgin returns*.]

Semicho. Has *Orgar* left the grove ?

Semicho. He has, my sister.

Semicho. Then here, and aid *Elfrida's* last resolve,
 Who takes the only way stern fate has left
 To save her plighted faith for ever pure
 To her dead *Atelwold*.

Semicho. Forbid it, Patience ;
 Forbid it, that submissive calm of soul,
 Which teaches meek-ey'd Piety to smile
 Beneath the scourge of heav'n.

Semicho. Ye need not fear it,
 She means not self-destruction. Thanks to heav'n,
 Huge and o'erbearing as her mis'ry is,
 It cannot so oblit'rate from her breast
 The written rule of duty. Her pure soul
 Means, on the instant, to devote itself
 To heav'n and holiness. Assist her strait,
 Lest *Edgar's* presence, and her father's rage,
 Prevent the blest intention. See, she comes.
 Kneel on each side, devoutly kneel around her,
 And breathe some pray'er in high and solemn strains,
 That angels, from their thrones of light, may hear
 And ratify her vow.

ELFRIDA,

ELFRIDA, CHORUS.

[Elfrida kneels, and the Virgins divide into two Troops]

Semicho. Hear, Angels, hear,
Hear from these nether thrones of Light ;
And O in golden characters record
Each firm, immutable, immortal word.
Then wing your solemn flight
Up to the heav'n of heav'ns, and there
Hang the conspicuous tablet high,
'Mid the dread records of eternity.

Elf. Hear first, that *Athelwold's* sad widow swears
To rear a hallow'd convent o'er the place
Where stream'd his blood ; there will she weep thro'
life

Immur'd with this chaste throng of Virgins ; there
Each day shall six times hear her full-voic'd choir
Chaunt the slow requiem o'er her martyr'd Lord ;
There too, when midnight lours with awful gloom,
She'll rise observant of the stated call
Of waking grief, bear the dim livid taper
Along the winding isles, and at the altar
Kiss ev'ry pale shrine with her trembling lips,
Press the cold stone with her bent knee, and call
On fainted *Athelwold*.

Semicho. Hear, Angels, hear,
Hear from these nether thrones of Light,
And O in golden characters record
Each firm, immutable, immortal word ;
Then wing your solemn flight
Up to the heav'n of heav'ns, and there
Hang the conspicuous tablet high,
'Mid the dread records of eternity.

Elf. Hear next, that *Athelwold's* sad widow swears
Never to violate the holy vow
She to his truth first plighted ; swears to bear
The sober singleness of widowhood
To her cold grave. If from this chaste resolve
She ev'n in thought should swerve, if gaudy pomp,
Or flatt'ring greatness e'er should tempt one wish

To

To stray beyond this purpose, may that heav'n,
Which hears this vow, punish its violation
As heav'nly justice ought.

Cho. Hear, Angels, hear,
Hear from these nether thrones of Light,
And O in golden characters record
Each firm, immutable, immortal word.
Then wing your solemn flight
Up to the heav'n of heav'ns, and there
Hang the conspicuous tablet high,
'Mid the dread records of eternity.

F I N I S. .

T H E
DESERT ISLAND,

A
DRAMATIC POEM,

As it is acted at the

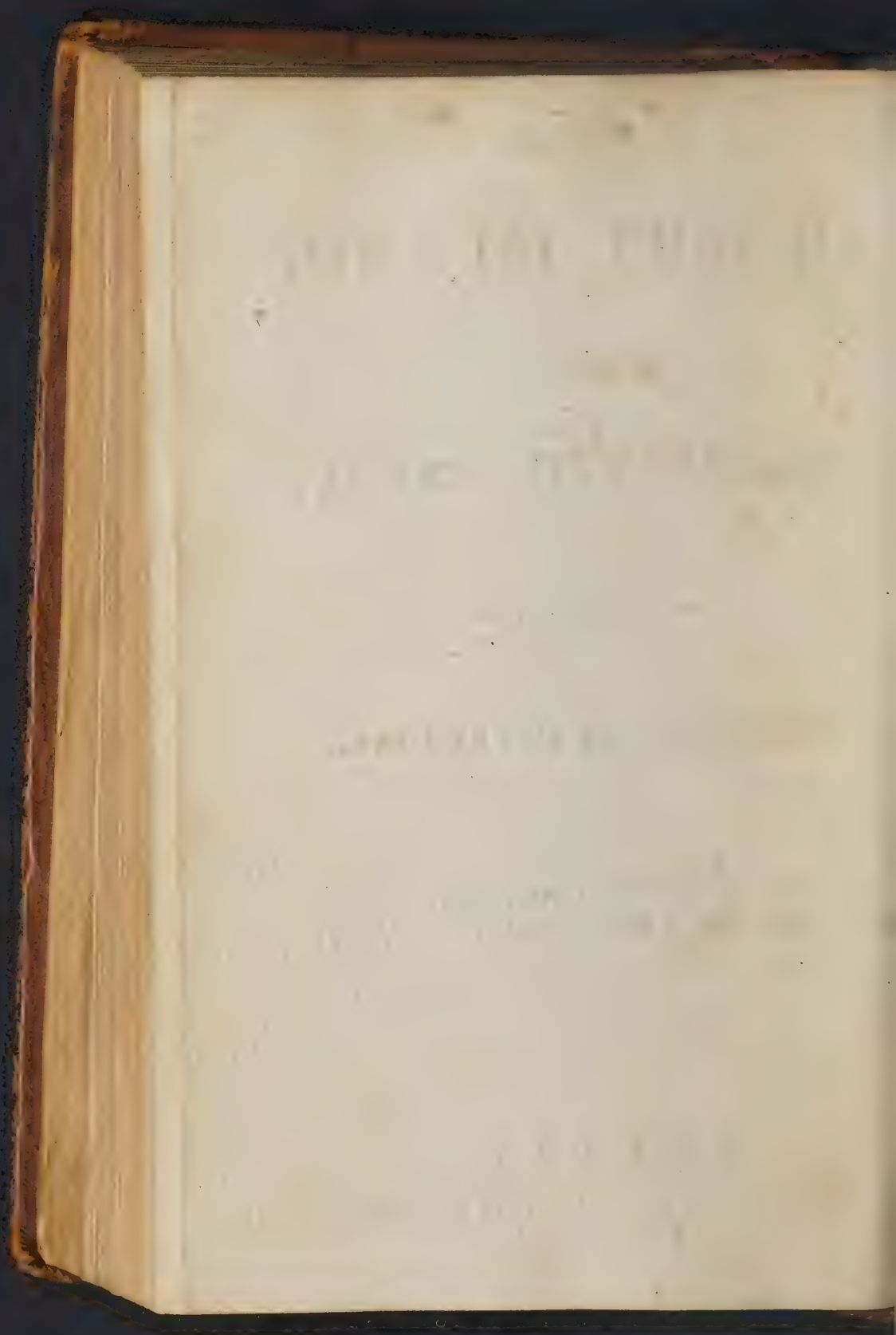
Theatre-Royal in DRURY-LANE.

*Te, dulcis conjux, te solo in littore secum
Te veniente die, te decedente canebat.*

VIRG.

L O N D O N:

Printed for PAUL VAILLANT in the Strand:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Piece is founded on the *Ifola Disabitata* of the celebrated ABBE METASTASIO: In reading the Performance of that great Genius, the present Writer received so exquisite a Pleasure, that he contracted a Passion for the Subject, and could not refrain from exercising his Pen upon it. In the Prosecution of his Plan, he knew enough of the modern Theatre, to perceive that it was thin of what our Play-followers call Business; and he was aware that on the Stage it might prove (to use Milton's Words) *very different from what among us passes for Best*. The same Remark was made by a Friend of the Author's, who thought it hazardous to offer to a popular Assembly a Piece, in which there were none of those Strokes that generally succeed with the Multitude. "Can't you," said he, "throw in something here and there to season it more to the public Appetite?—Suppose you were to change the Title, and fix the Scene among the *Anthropophagi*, or among the *Men, whose Heads do grow beneath their Shoulders*—a few of those extraordinary Personages exhibited on the Stage, will prove very acceptable:—What think you of an *Irish* Servant in it?—That certainly will insure Success, the more especially if you add some aerial Beings, and conclude the Whole with a drunken Song by the Tars of *Old England*."—The Author was sensible of the Force of these Observations; but the GREAT MILTON (mentioned above) stared him in the Face, with his Reflections on "the Error of introducing trivial and vulgar Persons, which, by all Judicious, hath been counted absurd, and brought in without Discretion, CORRUPTLY to gratify the People."*—He therefore determined to preserve the Integrity of his original Design, and to try what would be the Effect of a simple Fable, with but few Incidents, supported entirely by the Spirit of Poetry, Sentiment, and Passion. To combine these three Qualities is in-

* Vide, Preface to *Samson Agonistes*.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

deed an arduous Task; and the Author, therefore, does not flatter himself that he has entirely succeeded in so difficult an Attempt.

In Justice to METASTASIO, he thinks proper to inform the mere *English* Reader, that he hath not been a Translator on this Occasion, but has followed the Impulse of his own Imagination, excepting in a few Passages. The ITALIAN POET gave the Fable; the present Writer made his own Use of it; or in other Words, the Ground-work, or *Canevas*, (as the *French* call it) is MESTATASIO's; for the Colouring Mr. *Murphy* is answerable.

He could not but be surpris'd to find that, on the first Night, the Scene in the third Act, between *Sylvia* and *Henrico*, was deemed equivocal. There is always a sufficient Number ready to ascribe to an Author various Meanings, which he never had, "and see at Cannon's what was never there."---To these Gentlemen he returns his Thanks; but the Species of Wit, which they are willing to allow him, he begs leave publicly to disclaim. The Character of a Girl, who has never seen a Man, and who has been taught to think of such a Being with Horror, is merely imaginary; but the possible, or poetical Existence of such a Girl being once established, it is to be wished that the Critics would agree what Questions it is natural for her to ask on her first Interview with a man. METASTASIO makes her say,

Che vuoi da me?

Un buon sei dunque!

Andiamo insieme.

Ah! troppo non trattenerti, &c.

And these little Touches, (so differently do we judge in *England*) were thought abroad to be delicate Strokes of the most elegant Simplicity.

He could wish it had been universally understood that it was not a TRAGEDY he offered to the Public, but a DRAMATIC POEM; that is to say, a Piece with some interesting Situations to engage the Affections, but which affords more Room for a Picturesque Imaginati-

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

on to display itself, than is generally allowed to the more important Concerns of real Tragedy, where the distress should be always encreasing, where the Passion should be alwise rising to fuller and stronger Emotions, and where of Course the Poet ought not to find Leisure for Imagery and Description. Had this been felt and acknowledged, no Body would have looked for another Kind of Entertainment than was promised, and the Smiles arising from SYLVIA's Dread of a Man (on the Discovery of him) and her gradual Attachment to him in Compliance with natural Instinct, would never have been judged inconsistent with the Colour of the whole. But if the Author of the *Desert Island* has erred in this, he has the Consolation of having erred with the greatest Poet now in *Europe*.

As many of the malevolent Writers of the Age have heretofore honoured the Author with their Abuse, and as he was apprehensive that they still remained under the Oppression of their Dullness and Obscurity, it was deemed proper to call them forth into Daylight, by exhibiting one general Representative of them all on the Stage. For this he returns his Thanks to the Author of the Prologue; and if any needy Book-sellers, or unhappy Authors, can find their Account in taking further Liberties with him, he hereby declares, he should be sorry not to have merit enough to provoke some of them, and for their Encouragement, he adds in the Words of the noble Author of the *Characteristics*, that "He will never reply, unless he should hear of them or their Works in any good Company a " Twelve-month after."

Lincoln's Inn,
Jan. 26. 1760.

The AUTHOR.

P R O L O G U E,

Written and spoken by Mr. GARRICK,

In the Character of a DRUNKEN POET.

*A*LL, all shall out—all that I know and feel;
I will by Heav'n—to higher Powers appeal!—
Behold a Bard!—no Author of to-night—
No, no,—they can't say that, with all their spite:
Ay, you may frown (looking behind the scenes) I'm
at you, great and small—

Your Poet, Players, Managers and all!—
These Fools within here, swear that I'm in liquor,
My passion warms me—makes my utt'rance thicker;—
I totter too—but that's the Gout and Pain,—
French Wines, and living high, have been my bane.—
From all temptations now, I wisely steer me;
Nor will I suffer one fine Woman near me.
And this I sacrifice, to give you pleasure—
For you I've coin'd my brains,—and here's the treasure!

[Pulls out a Manuscript.

*A treasure this, of profit and delight!
And all thrown by for this damn'd stuff to-night:—
This is a play would water ev'ry eye!—
If I but look upon't, it makes me cry:
This Play would tears from blood-stain'd Soldiers
And melt the bowels of hard-hearted Law! [draw,—
Would fore and aft the storm-proof Sailor rake;—
Keep turtle-eating Aldermen awake!
Would the cold blood of ancient Maidens thrill,
And make ev'n pretty younger tongues lie still.*

This

P R O L O G U E.

*This Play not ev'n Managers would refuse,—
Had Hav'n but given 'em any brains, to chuse!—*

[Puts up his Manuscript.

*Your Bard to-night, bred in the ancient school,
Designs and measures all by critic rule;
'Mongst Friends—it goes no farther—He's a Fool.
So very classic, and so very dull—*

*His Desert Island is his own dear Skull:
No Soul to make the Play-house ring, and rattle,
No trumpets, Thunder, Ranting, Storms, or Battle!
But all your fine poetic Prittle-prattle.*

The Plot is this—A Lady's cast away—

"Long before the beginning of the Play ;"

And they are taken by a Fisherman,

The Lady and the Child—'tis Bays's plan—

So on he blunders—He's an Irishman.—

'Tis all alike—his comic stuff I mean—

*I hate all humour—it gives me the Spleen ;
So damn'em both, with all my heart, unsight, unseen.*

But should you ruin him, still I'm undone—

I've try'd all ways to bring my Phœnix on—

[Shewing his Play again.

*Flatter I can with any of our Tribe—
Can cut and slash—indeed I cannot bribe ;
What must I do then ?—beg you to subscribe.*

Be kind ye Boxes, Galleries, and Pit—

'Tis but a Crown a piece, for all this Wit ;

'All Sterling Wit—to puff myself I hate—

You'll ne'er supply your wants at such a rate!

'Tis worth your money, I would scorn to wrong ye,—

You smile consent—I'll send my hat among ye.

[Going, he returns.

P R O L O G U E.

*So much beyond all praise your bounties swell!
Not my own Tongue, my Gra-ti-tude can tell—
“ A little Flattery sometimes does well.”*

}
}

[Staggers off.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

<i>Ferdinand</i> , Husband to <i>Constantia</i> ,	<i>Mr. Holland.</i>
<i>Henrico</i> , Friend to <i>Ferdinand</i> ,	<i>Mr. Fleetwood.</i>

W O M E N.

<i>Connstantia</i> ,	<i>Mrs. Pritchard.</i>
<i>Sylvia</i> , her Daughter,	<i>Miss Prichard.</i>

SCENE, A DESERT ISLAND.

T H E
D E S E R T I S L A N D .

A C T I .

The scene represents a vale in the Desert Island, surrounded by rocks, caverns, grottos, flowering shrubs, exotic trees, and plants growing wild. On one side is a cavern in a rock, over the entrance of which appears, in large characters, an unfinished inscription. CONSTANTIA is discovered at work at the inscription, in a romantic habit of skins, leaves, and flowers; in her hand she holds a broken sword, and stands in act to finish the imperfect inscription.

After a short pause, she begins.

R E S T, rest my arm— ye weary sinews, rest—
Awhile forget your office—on this rock
Here sit thee down, and think thyself to stone.

[Sits down.

—Would heav'n I could!— *[rises]* Ye shrubs, ye
nameless plants,
That wildly gadding 'midst the rifted rocks
Wreath your fantastic shoots—ye darksome trees,
That weave yon verdant arch above my head,
Shad'wing this solemn scene;—ye moss grown caves,
Romantic grottos,—all ye objects drear,—
Tell me, in pity tell me, have ye seen,
Thro' the long series of revolving time,
In which you have inclos'd this lonely mansion,

A

Say,

Say, have ye seen another wretch like me?
 No, never!—You, in tend'rest sympathy,
 Have join'd my plaints—you, at the midnight hour,
 When with uprooted hair I've strew'd the earth,
 And call'd my husband gone;—have call'd in vain
 Perfidious *Ferdinand*!—you, at that hour,
 Have waken'd echo in each vocal cell,
 Till ev'ry grove, and ev'ry mountain hoar,
 Mourn'd to my griefs responsive—Well you know
 The story of my woes—Ev'n yonder marble
 Relenting feels the touch; receives each trace
 That forms the melancholy tale — Tho' rude,
 And inexpert my hand;—though all uncouth
 The instrument,—yet there behold my work
 Well nigh complete—let me about it straight.

[*She advances towards the rock.*]

Ye deep engraven letters, there remain;
 And if in future time resistless fate
 Should throw some *Briton* on this dismal shore;
 Then speak aloud;—to his astonish'd sense
 Relate my sad, my memorable case—
 Alarm his soul, call out—

STOP TRAVELLER.

HERE

CONSTANTIA,

WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,

SYLVIA.

WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,

THE PERFIDIOUS

FERDINAND;

WHO PRETENDING TO LAND HER

FOR REFRESHMENT

FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,

BAR-

BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER
ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,
WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.
FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,
PITY MY WRONGS,
BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND,
(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)
I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R — — —

Revenge!—the word Revenge is wanting still.
Ye holy pow'rs! if with one pitying look
You'll deign to view me, grant my earnest pray'r!
Let me but finish this my sad inscription,
Then let this busy, this afflicted heart
Be still at once, and beat my breast no more.

[*She goes on with her work.*]

Enter Sylvia.

Sylvia. My dearest mother—oh! quite out of breath.

Const. What is the matter, child?

Sylvia. Why, ma'am, my heart,
Beats wild with joy—oh! such an incident!—

Const. What incident, my sweet?

Sylvia. My little fawn,
My dear, my loveliest fawn,—for many days
Whose loss I've mourn'd; for whose dear sake I've
left

No corner of the isle unsearch'd;—this moment
O'er the dew-spangled lawn, with printless feet,
Came bounding to me; playful frisk'd about
With inexpressive airs of glad surprise,

With eager signs of transport—Big round tears
 Stood trembling in his eye, and seem'd to speak
 His fond regret still mingling with his joy.

Const. And is it that, my love, delights thee so?—

Sylvia. And can you wonder, ma'am?—yes, that
 delights me,

Transports me, charms me;—he's my darling care,
 My dear companion, my sweet little friend,
 That loves me, gambols round me, watches still
 With anxious tenderness my ev'ry motion,
 Pants on my bosom, leaps into my arms,
 And wanders o'er me with a thousand kisses.
 Before this time, he never once stray'd from me;
 —I thought I lost him;—but he's found again!
 And can you wonder I'm transported thus!

Const. Oh! happy state of innocence!—how sweet
 Thy joys, simplicity, e'er yet the mind
 With artificial passions learns to glow;
 Ere taste has ta'en our senses to her school,
 Has given each well-bred appetite her laws,
 Taught us to feel imaginary blifs,
 Or else expire in elegance of pain.

Sylvia. Nay, now, again, you're growing grave
 —'tis you

Give laws to appetite;—forbid each sense
 To minister delight; your eyes are dimm'd
 With constant tears;—the roses on your cheek
 Fade like yon vi'lets, when excessive dews
 Have bent their drooping melancholy heads;
 Soon they repair their graces; soon recal
 Their aromatic lives, and smiling yield
 To sighing Zephyr all their balmy sweets.
 To grief you're still a prey; still wan despair

Sits with'ring at your heart, and ev'ry feature
Has your directions to be fix'd in woe.
Nay, pr'ythee now clear up—you make me sad——
—Will you, Mama, forget your cares?——

Const. Forget!——

Oh! sweet oblivion, thy all-healing balm
To wretches you refuse!—can I forget
Perfidious *Ferdinand*?——His tyrant form
Is ever present—The deluding looks,
Endearing accents, and the soft regards
With which he led me to yon moss-clad cave,
There to repose awhile—oh! cruel man!
And you, ye conscious wilds, I call you false!
Accomplices in guilt!——The Zephyrs bland
That pant upon each leaf;—the melody
That warbles thro' your groves; the falling fountains
That at each deep'ning cadence lull the mind,
Were all suborn'd against me; all conspir'd
To wrap me in the silken folds of sleep.
Sudden I wake—where, where is *Ferdinand*?
I rave, I shriek,—no *Ferdinand* replies;——
Frantic I rove thro' all your winding glades,—
I seek the shore;—no *Ferdinand* appears—
I climb yon craggy steeps; I see the ship
Unfurling all her sails—I call aloud,
I stamp, cry out;—deaf as the roaring sea
He catches ev'ry gale that blows from heav'n,
And cleaves his liquid way.——

Sylvia. Why will you thus
Recal your past afflictions?——

Const. Ah! what then,
Thou wretched *Constance*, what were then thy feel-
ings?

I rend my tresses,—beat my breast in vain,
 In vain stretch out these ineffectual arms,
 Pierce with my frantic cries the wounded air,
 Dash my bare bosom on the flinty rock,
 Then rise again, and strain my aching sight,
 To see the ship still less'ning to my view,
 And take the last, last glimpse, as far, far off
 In the horizon's verge she dwindles still,
 Grows a dim speck, and mixes with the clouds
 Just vanishing,—just lost,—ah! seen no more.

Sylvia, I pr'ythee don't talk so—my heart dies in
 Why won't you strive a little to forget [me—
 This melancholy theme?—the twilight grey
 Of morn but faintly streaks the east; the stars
 Still glimmer thro' the whit'ning air; the groves
 Are mute; yon all-devouring deep lies hush'd;
 The tuneful birds, and the whole brute creation
 Still sink, in soft oblivious slumber wrapp'd,
 Forgetful of their cares;—all,—all but you
 Know some repose;—you pass the dreary night
 In tears and ceaseless grief; then rising wild
 Anticipate the dawn, and here resume
 Your doleful task, or else ascend the height
 Of yonder promontory; there forlorn
 You sit, and hear the brawling waves beneath
 Lash the resounding shore; your brimful eye
 Still fix'd on that sad quarter of the heav'ns
 Where my hard father disappear'd.

Const. Yes, there
 My melancholy loves to dwell; there loves
 To sit, and pine over its hoard of grief;
 To roll these eyes o'er all the fullen main,
 In hopes some sail may this way shape its course,
 With tidings of the human race—Oh! heav'ns!

Could

Could I behold that dear, that wish'd for sight,
Could I but see some vestiges of man,
Some mark of social life, ev'n tho' the ship
Sould shun this isle, and court propitious gales
Beneath some happier clime; yet still the view
Would cheer my soul, and my heart bound with joy
At that faint prospect of my fellow creatures.
But not for me, such transport;—not for me—
Dear native land, I now no more must see thee,
Condemn'd in ever-during solitude to mourn,
From thy sweet joys, society, debarr'd!

Sylvia. But to your happiness what's wanting here?
Full many a time I've heard you praise the arts,
The polish'd manners, and gay scenes of bliss
Which Europe yields—yet ever and anon
I from your own discourse can gather too
That happiness is all unknown to Europe;
That envy there can dwell, and discontent;
The smile, that wakens at another's woe;
The heart, that sickens at another's praise;
The tongue, that carries the malignant tale;
The little spirit; that subverts a friend;
Fraud, perfidy, ingratitude, and murder.
Now sure with reason I prefer these scenes
Of innocence, tranquillity, and joy!

Const. Alas! my child, 'tis easy to forego
Unknown delights — pleasures we've never felt.—

Sylvia. Are we not here what you yourself have
told me

In Europe sovereigns are? — here we have fix'd
Our little sylvan reign. — The guileless race
Of animals, that roam the lawns and woods,
Are tractable and willing subjects; — pay
Passive obedience to us — and yon sea

Be-

Becomes our tributary ; hither rolls
 In each hoarse-murm'ring tide his various stores
 Of daintiest shell fish — the unbidden earth,
 Of human toil all ignorant, pours forth
 Whatever to the eye, or taste, can prove
 Rare, exquisite, and good — at once the spring
 Calls forth its green delights, and summer's blush
 Glows on each purple branch. The seasons here
 On the same tree, with glad surprize,
 Behold each other's gifts arise :
 Spontaneous fruits around us grow ;
 For ever here the Zephyrs blow :

Shrubs ever flow'ring,

Shades embow'ring ;

Heav'nly spots, -

Cooling grotts,

Verdant mountains,

Falling fountains ;

Pure limpid rills,

Adown the hills,

That wind their way

And o'er the meadows play,

Enamour'd of th' enchanted ground :

Const. What is this waste of beauty, all these charms
 Of cold, inanimate, unconscious nature,
 Without the social sense ? those joys, my Sylvia,
 Thou can'st not miss ; for thou hast never known
 'em.

Sylvia. But still, those beauteous tracts of Europe,
 Which you so much regret, are full of men ;
 And men, you know, are animals of prey :
 I'm sure that you yourself have told me so
 A thousand times. —

Const. And if I have, my child,
I told a dismal truth. — Oh ! they are false,
Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers ;
Their unrelenting hearts no harbour know
For honour, truth, humanity, or love:

Sylvia. Well then, in this lone isle, this dear retreat
From them at least we're free. —

Const. Poor innocent !
I can't but grieve for her — [*Bursts into tears, aside.*

Sylvia. Why fall afresh
Those drops of sorrow ? — pray you, now give o'er. —

Const. My heart will break — I do not grieve, my
child —

I can't conceal my tears — they must have way. —

Sylvia. Nay, if you love me, sure you will not thus
Make my heart ache within me ! —

Const. No, my sweet —
I will not weep — all will be well, my love —
Oh ! misery ! — I can't, — I can't contain —
The black ingratitude ! — — — [*Weeps.*

Sylvia. Say, is there aught
That I can do, Mama, to give you comfort ? —
If there is, tell me — shall I fetch my fawn ?
Dry up your tears, and he is your's this moment,
— I'll run and bring him to you. —

Const. Sylvia, no ! — — —

Sylvia. Nay do, Mama — I beg you will — you
shall. — — — [*Exit.*

Constantia alone.

Alas ! I fear my brain will turn — the sun
Full sixteen times hath made his annual course,
Since here I've dragg'd a miserable being,

The

The victim of despair ; which long e'er now,
 To phrenzy kindling, must have forc'd me dash
 My brain in madness on yon flinty rocks,
 And end my pangs at once ; if the keen instinct
 Of strong maternal love had not restrain'd
 My wild disorder'd soul, and bade me live
 To watch her tender infancy ; to rear
 Her blooming years ; with fond delighted care
 To tend each blossom of her growing mind,
 And see light gradual dawning on her soul.
 And yet to see her thus, — to see her here,
 Cut off from every social bliss ; condemn'd,
 Like some fair flow'r that in a desert grows,
 To breathe its sweets into the passing wind,
 And waste its bloom all unperceiv'd away !
 It is enough to break a mother's heart.
 Let me not think on't — let me shun that thought:
[Sits down and sings.]

I.

What tho' his guilt my heart hath torn,
 Yet lovely is his mein,
 His eyes mild-op'ning as the morn,
 Round him each grace is seen.
 But oh ! ye nymphs, your loves ne'er let him win,
 For oh ! deceit and falshood dwell within.

II.

From his red lip his accent stole,
 Soft as kind vernal snows ;
 Melting they came, and in the soul
 Desire and joy arose.
 But oh ! ye nymphs, ne'er listen to his art,
 For oh ! base falshood rankles in his heart.

III. He

III.

He left me in this lonely state !

He fled, and left me here,
Another Ariadne's fate,

To mourn the live-long year.

He fled — but oh ! what pains the heart must prove,
When we reveal the crimes of him we love !

Enter *Sylvia*.

Sylvia. I cannot bring him now — in yonder stream
That thro' its pebbled channel glides along
Soft-murm'ring to the sea, he stands to cool
His beauteous form in the pure limpid rill.
But still he shall be your's —

Const. To thee, my child,
To thee he causes joy — but joy to me
There's nothing now can bring — left by my husband !
By the false barb'rous man ! —

Sylvia. And yet this man
You still regret — you must excuse me now —
I vow, I can't but think, 'midst all your grief,
All your reproaches, your complaints against him,
That still this man, this cruel fell deceiver,
Has found, — I know not why — within your breast
Some tender advocate, to plead his cause.

Const. No, *Sylvia*, no ; my love is turn'd to hate ! —

Sylvia. Then dry your sorrows and this day begin
A happier train of years — and lo ! the sun
Emerges from the sea — he lifts his orb
Above the purpled main, and streams abroad
His golden fluid o'er the world — the birds
Exulting wake their notes — all things rejoice,

And

And hills, and groves, and rocks, and vallies smile.
 Let me intreat you then forget your cares,
 And share the general blifs.—

*[The sun is seen to rise at a distance, as it were
 out of the sea.]*

Const. Once more all hail,
 Thou radiant power, who in your bright career
 Or rising or descending, hast beheld
 My never-ceasing woe! — again thou climb'st
 In orient glory, and recall'st the cares
 And toils of man and beast — but oh! in all
 Your flaming course, your beams will never light
 Upon a wretch so lost, so curst as I am.

Sylvia. And yet, my mother ———

Const. Mine are pangs, my child,
 Strokes of adversity no time can cure,
 No lenient arts can soften or assuage.
 But I'll not grieve thee, *Sylvia* — I'll retire
 To some sequester'd haunt — There, all forlorn,
 I'll sit, and wear myself away in thought. *[Exit.]*

Sylvia, alone.

Alas! how obstinately bent on grief
 Is her whole mind! — the votarist of care!
 In vain I try to soften her afflictions,
 And with each art beguile her from her woe.
 I chide, intreat, caress, and all in vain.
 And what to me seems strange, perverse, and won-
 d'rous,
 The more I strive, the more her sorrows swell:
 Her tears the faster fall, fall down her cheek
 In streams so copious, and such bitter anguish,

That

That I myself at length, I know not how,
Catch the soft weakness, and o'erpow'r'd with grief,
Flow all dissolving in unbidden tears.
Assist her heav'n. — Her heart will break at last —
I tremble at the thought — I'll follow straight
And still implore, beseech, try ev'ry way
To reconcile her to herself and me.
But see, look yonder ! what a sight is there !
What can it mean, that huge enormous mass
That moves upon the bosom of the deep !
— A floating mountain ! — no — a mountain never
Could change its place — for such a monstrous bulk
How light it urges on its way — how quick,
How rapid in its course ! — What can it be —
I'll tow'rd the shore, and from the pointed rock
That juts into the waves, at leisure view
This wond'rous sight, and what it is explore.

End of the first Act.

B

A C T

A C T II.

SCENE. *Another view of the island, with an opening to the sea between several hills and rocks.*

Enter Sylvia.

Sylvia, **S**TILL I behold it—still it glides along
Thro' the tumultuous sea—and lo! before it

The waves divide! and now they close again,
Leaving a tract of angry foam behind.
It must be, sure, some monster of the deep;
For see!—upon its huge broad back it bears
Expanded wings, that, spreading to the wind,
Lie broad incumbent o'er the surge beneath—
—Ah! save me, save me! what new forms appear!
What shapes of unknown being rise before me!
From yon huge monster's side they issue forth,
And bolt upon the shore!—behold, they stop,
And now with eager disconcerted pace
Precipitate rush forward on the isle,—
Now 'mongst the rocks they wind their silent way.

Ferdinand and Henrico appear.

Protect me, heav'n! defend me! shield me!—ah!
Hide me, ye woods, within your deep recess;
Ne'er may these monsters penetrate your haunts;
Ne'er trace my footsteps thro' your darksome ways:
Behind the covert of this woodbine bow'r
Oh! let me rest conceal'd!—— *[She retires.]*

Fer-

Ferdinand and Henrico come forward.

Hen. No trace appears,
No vestige here is seen of human kind.
'Tis drear, 'tis waste, and unfrequented all.
And hark!—what noise?—from yonder toiling deep
How dreadful sounds the pealing roar!—my friend,
My valued Ferdinand, 'twere best retire.
This cannot be the place. —

Ferd. Oh! my Henrico,
This is the fatal shore—the well-known scene,
Yon bay, yon rocks, yon mountains, from whose brows
Th' imbow'ring forest over-hangs the deep,
Each well-remember'd object strikes my view,
Answers the image in my mind preserv'd,
Engraven there by love's recording hand,
And never, but with life, to fade from thence.

Hen. And yet thy love-enfeebled soul may form
Imaginary tokens of resemblance.
This soil unbeaten seems by mortal step.

Ferd. No, my Henrico, no—this is the spot—
My heart in ev'ry pulse confirms it to me.
This is the place, the very place, where fate
Began to weave the tissue of my woes.
Oh! I was curst, abhorr'd of heav'n, or else
I ne'er had trusted the contentious waves,
But kept my store of happiness at home.

Hen. Repine not for an action that arose
From filial piety,—a father's mandate
Requir'd obedience from you, ———

Ferd. To his summons
I paid a glad attention—yet, good heav'n!
Why in that early æra of my bliss

Should then his orders come, to dash my joys?—
 Oh! I was blest with all that rarest beauty,
 With all that ev'ry Venus of the mind,
 The tender heart, and the enliven'd wit
 Could pour delightful on the raptur'd sense
 Of the young bridegroom, whose admiring eyes
 Still hung enamour'd on her ev'ry charm,
 And thence drank long inspiring draughts of love,
 Unfated still,—still kindling at the view.

Hen. Thy fate indeed was hard ———

Ferd. Heav'n knows it was ———

Each soft desire, each joy refin'd was mine—
 The hours soft glided by, and as they pass'd
 Scatter'd new blessings from their balmy wings;
 They saw our ever new delight; they saw
 A blooming offspring crown our mutual loves;
 The mother's features, and her ev'ry grace
 In this our daughter exquisitely trac'd.
 But to be torn from that supreme of bliss,—
 My wife,—*Constantia*,—and my beauteous babe,
 Here to be left on this untravell'd isle,
 To pine in bitterness of want!—their bed
 The cold bare earth, while the inclement winds
 From yonder main came howling round their heads,
 Until at length the friendly hand of death
 In pity threw his shroud upon their woes,

Hen. Too sure, I fear, they're lost. ———

Ferd. Perhaps, my friend, ———

Perhaps when gasping in the pangs of death,—
 —When ev'ry beauty faded from her cheek,
 —And her eye languish'd motionless and dim,
 Perhaps ev'n then, in that sad dismal hour,
 My name still hover'd on her quiv'ring lips,
 And nought but death could tear me from her heart.

Hen.

Hen. Her tend'rest thoughts no doubt were fix'd on thee.

Ferd. Her tend'rest thoughts! oh! no--her utmost rage -----

Who knows, Henrico, but she deem'd me false;
Deem'd me a vile deserter from her arms!
She did,—she must—each strong appearance join'd
To mark me guilty—Oh! that thought strikes deep
Its scorpion stings into my very heart.
Could she but think me so refin'd in guilt,
So exquisite a villain, as to cause
A moment's anguish in that tender breast,
Where all the loves, where all the virtues dwell,
—'Twere misery,—'twere torture in th' extreme—
And yet she thought me such— by heav'n she did—
Accus'd me of the worst, the blackest treason,
Of treason to my love—stung with th' idea
She roam'd this isle, and to these desert wilds
Pour'd forth her lamentable tale;—who knows
But on some craggy cliff whole nights she sat
Raving in madness to the moon's pale gleam;
Until at length all kindling into phrenzy,
Clasping her infant closer to her breast,
With desperation wild from off the rock
Headlong she plung'd into the roaring waves,
While her last accents murmur'd faithless Ferdinand.

Hen. Distract not thus your soul with fancied woes:
She could not think thee faithless; thee, whose mind,
Whose ev'ry virtue were so well approv'd.

Ferd. Still will I hope she did not.—Oh! she knew
I made that voyage in duty to a father.
A while we steer'd a happy course, until
Beneath the burning line, from whence the sun
In straight direction pours his ardent blaze

On ev'ry fever'd sense, a storm arose,
 Sudden and wild ; ' as if a war of nature
 Were thund'ring o'er our heads—full twenty days
 It drove us headlong on the dashing surge,
 Far from our destin'd way, until at length
 In evil hour we landed on this isle.

Sylvia returns, and peeps from behind a hedge.

Sylvia. Methought I heard a sound, as if they both
 Held mutual converse——yonder lo ! they stand——
 They do not follow me—— what can they be!——

Ferd. There is the spot, just where yon aged tree
 Imbrowns the plain beneath, on which the villains,
 The unrelenting band of pirates, seiz'd me—
 There I receiv'd my wound, and there I fought
 Till my sword shiver'd in my hand—worn out,
 Oppress'd by numbers, pow'rless, and disarm'd,
 They bore me headlong to the beach ; in vain
 Piercing the air with horrid ories ; in vain
 Back tow'r'd the cave, where poor *Constantia* slept,
 With her lov'd infant daughter in her arms,
 Straining my ardent eyes—my eyes alone !
 For oh ! their cruelty had bound my arms,
 And tears and looks were all I then could use.

Sylvia. The voice but indistinctly strikes my ear,
 Would they would turn this way.——

Ferd. Fetter'd, ty'd down,
 They dragg'd me to the vessel—bore me hence—
 In vain our ship pursu'd.—In vain gave chase—
 Form'd with detested skill, the guilty bark
 In which they plung'd me, gliding o'er the main
 Outstripp'd their tardy course—they steer'd away
 Far to their regions of accursed bondage,

Far from *Constantia*, far from ev'ry joy
A doating husband, and delighted father
Feels in mix'd rapture with his wife and child.
Oh ! I could pour my plaints—but I'll not wound
Thy ear, my friend, with further lamentation.

Hen. Would heav'n I could remove the cause——

Ferd. Alas !

That cannot be—Thou can'st not bid return
Th' irrevocable flight of time ; recall
The moments of our young delight ; annul
And render void, what once the hand of fate
Hath, from its stores of woe, pour'd down upon me.

Sylvia. [*half concealed.*] Why will they stand with
looks averted thus ?

I long to see their countenance and mien.

Ferd. But yet, thou best of friends, yet grant me this :
Assist my search ;—oh ! let me roam around
This fatal shore—the isle's circumference
Circles a scanty space—we cannot lose
Each other here—do thou pursue that path
That leads due east—this way I'll bend my course.

Hen. By heav'n there is no task of hardihood,
Of toil, or danger, but I'll try for thee ;
For thee, my friend ;—to thee I owe my life,
And that more precious boon, my liberty :
Thou hast releas'd me from the galling chain,
From slav'ry's bitter pressure—'twas thy skill
That form'd the plan of freedom, seiz'd the vessel,
And made your friends the partners of your flight.

For thee I'll roam around—but oh ! I fear
Our search will prove in vain.——

Ferd. Too sure it will——

And yet it is the doom of love like mine

To dwell for ever on the sad idea
 Of the dear object lost; to visit oft,
 A lonely pilgrim, ev'ry well known scene,
 Each haunted glade, where the lov'd object stray'd;
 'To call each circumstance of pass'd delight
 Back to the soul; in fond excursions seek
 The dear lamented shade—Then, oh! my friend,
 Then let me taste that sad, that pensive comfort,
 Range thro' these wilds; ascend each craggy steep,
 Try in each grotto, in each gloomy cave
 If haply there remain some vestige of *Constantia*. [*Exit.*]

Hen. On yonder beach we'll meet again—fare-
 well!——

Sylvia. Conceal thee Sylvia; ah! it comes this
 way!——

Then let me seek the covert of the woods,
 Where nods the brownest horror; there lie safe
 From the unusual sight of these strange beings. [*Exit.*]

Hen. [*solus.*] How cruel is my friend's condition!—
 For ever to regret, yet never find [doom'd
 The object of his soul—his early love
 He lavish'd all on her—with her it goes
 To the dank grave, and leaves him hapless here
 To die a lingering death. Yet still I'll try
 By ev'ry office friendship can perform
 To heal the wound that preys upon his life. [*Exit.*]

*The back scene closes, and presents a thick wood; then
 enter Sylvia.*

Sylvia. What have my eyes beheld? my flutt'ring
 heart
 Beats quick in strange emotions—from yon grove
 Of tufted trees, I saw this nameless being

Walk

Walk o'er the russet heath—its face appear'd
 Confess'd to view——It cannot be a man——
 No lines of cruelty deform'd his visage——
 Were it a man, his untam'd savage soul
 Would strongly speak in each distorted feature——
 This was all pleasing, amiable and mild :
 A gentle sorrow, bright'ning into smiles,
 Such as bespoke a calm, yet feeling spirit,
 Sat on its peaceful brow, and o'er it threw
 A gentle gleam of sweetness and of pain.
 —It cannot be a woman neither—no——
 The dress accords not with that mode, which oft
 My mother hath describ'd—Whate'er it be,
 Attraction dwells about it ; winning smiles ;
 Assuasive airs of tenderness and joy.
 I'll seek my mother—she perhaps may know
 These forms, to me unusual—By this row
 Of darksome pines, my steps all unperceiv'd
 May gain the place where with assiduous hand
 She works, and teaches the rude rocks to tell
 Her mournful elegy——what mean my feet ?
 —Why stand they thus forgetful of their office ?
 —Why heaves th' involuntary sigh ?—and why
 Thus in quick pulses beats my heart ?—my eyes
 A misty dimness covers—In my ears
 Strange murmurs sound—my very breath is lost——
 What can it be ?—I know thee, fear !—'tis thou
 That caus'est this !—and yet it can't be fear——
 Fear cannot thrill with pleasure thro' the veins ;
 Knows not this dubious joy——these grateful trem-
 blings——

I cannot guess what these emotions mean,
 Nor what this busy thing my heart would want !
 Let me seek shelter in my mother's arms.

[Exit:
 SCENE

SCENE *changes to the first view of the island, where
Constantia's inscription is seen.*

Enter Ferdinand.

No—never more shall these fond eyes behold her.
Lost, lost, my poor *Constantia* lost! In vain
I search these gloomy woods—In vain call out
Her honour'd name to ev'ry hill and dale.
My eyes are false, or on the craggy base
Of yonder rock some instrument appears,
The mark of human kind—— [*Takes it up.*
A broken sword!

Oh! all ye heav'nly pow'rs!—the very fame——
This once was mine—unfaithful to its trust
It fail'd me at my utmost need—I see
The well known characters; the very words
That form'd its motto—'tis, it is the same
Oh! were *Constantia* found!—what do I see?
All o'er with hair the flinty rocks bestrew'd!
These were her decent tresses—these in anguish
She tore relentless from her beauteous head,
Up by the roots she tore, and scatter'd wild
To all the passing winds—she still may live!
Constantia!—my belov'd, my life, return!
Constantia!—ha!—what mystic characters
Are hewn into the rock? my name appears——
[*He reads.*

STOP TRAVELLER.

HERE

CONSTANTIA,
WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,
SYLVIA,

WAS

WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,
THE PERFIDIOUS
FERDINAND;
WHO PRETENDING TO LAND HER
FOR REFRESHMENT
FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,
BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER
ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,
WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Support me, heav'n!—ah! no— withhold your aid.
Ye unrelenting pow'rs, and let me thus,
Each vital spark subsiding, thus expire.

[Leans against the rock.]

Enter Henrico.

What ho!—my Ferdinand!—this way the sound
Struck on my list'ning ear—what means my friend
Thus growing to the rock, transform'd to stone,
A breathing statue, 'midst the shapeless piles!—

Ferd. Henrico, there!—read there!—

Hen. Letters engrav'd!— *[He reads to himself
as far as*

SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Alas! my friend—*[They gaze speechless at each other
for some time, then Ferdinand falls.]*

The storm of grief o'erpow'rs his feeble spirits.
Now rouse thy strength, my Ferdinand, and bear
This load of sorrow like a man.———

Ferd. I do———

Thou see'st I do—I do not weep, my friend—
These eyes are dry—their very source is dry—
—I am her cruel husband to the last.———

Hen. Oh!

Hen. Oh ! thou wert ever kind and tender to her.

Ferd. Tender and kind !—look there !—there
stands the black,
The horrid roll of guilt denounc'd against me.
Lo ! the dread characters !—let me peruse
The whole sad record ; of this bitter woe
Still deeper drink, and gorge me with affliction.

[*He reads.*]

FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,

PITY MY WRONGS,

BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND,

(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET

WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)

I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R — — —

Revenge, she meant to say—the word's begun—
But death untimely stopt her hand—oh ! misery !
She thought me false, and yet could love me still—
The wound now pierces deeper—had she loath'd me,
Abhor'd me, curs'd me, 'twere not half the torture
This angel-goodness causes—and to lose her !
To lose a mind like her's, that thus could pour
Such unexampled tenderness and love,
Amidst the keenest anguish—on the earth
Measure thy length, thou wretch accurst !—there lie,
For ever lie, and to these woods and wilds
Howl out thy griefs in madness and despair.

Hen. I feel, I feel thy sorrows—oh ! my friend,——
Cruel event !—your tears, alas ! are just——
Then let them flow, and let me mingle mine—
Your gushing sorrows may assuage your grief,
This storm of rage attempt'ring into peace.

Ferd. Who

Ferd. Who talks of peace? — let phrenzy seize my
brain ———

Come, moon-struck madness, with thy glaring eye,
And clanking chain; come, shoot thy kindling fires
Into my inmost soul; — blast ev'ry thinking pow'r;
Raze each idea out; — tear up at once
The seat of memory — no — leave me that ———
Still leave me memory, to picture forth
Constantia's lovely form, that I may fit
With unclad sides, upon some blasted heath
And gloat upon her image; — see her still,
See her whole days with fancy's gushing eye,
And gaze on that alone ———

Hen. Arise, my friend,
And quitte this fatal shore ———

Ferd. And quit this shore!
But whither turn? — ah! whither shall I go? —
Where shelter me from misery? — this isle
Shall be my journey's bound. ———

Hen. What can'st thou mean?

Ferd. Never again to draw the vital air
But where my love expir'd — to feed my soul
With these sad objects, this sepulchral tale,
Ev'n to the height of yet unheard-of anguish:
To print my pious kisses on the rocks;
To bathe the ground, which her dear footsteps press'd,
With the incessant tears of burning anguish;
To make these wilds all vocal with her name,
Till this cold lifeless tongue shall move no more.

Hen. By heav'n, you must not think ———

Ferd. Farewell! — farewell! ———
Consult thy happiness! — for ever here

By fate I'm doom'd to stay—alas! *Constantia!* ——
 To perish with thy infant here!—no friend
 To close thy ghastly orbs!—thy pale remains
 On the bare earth expos'd, without the tribute
 Of a fond husband's tears o'er thy dead corse;—
 Without the last sad obsequies—yet here,
 I still will raise an empty sepulchre.
 There shall no cold unconscious marble form
 In mockery of imitated woe
 Bend o'er the fancy'd urn: myself will be
 The sad, the pensive, monumental figure,
 Distilling real anguish o'er the tomb;
 Till wasting by degrees I moulder down,
 And sink to silent dust.——

Hen. What man could do,
 Already you've perform'd——

Ferd. Prithee, no more——
 I will about it straight—this place affords
 Materials for the work—Thither I'll bring
 Whate'er can deck the scene—*Constantia*, yes;
 I will appease thy discontented shade,
 Then follow thee to yonder realms of bliss. [Exit.

Henrico solus.

His vehemence of grief bears down his reason.
 He must not linger here—his stay were fatal——
 Force will be necessary—to our boat
 I'll hasten back and call some trusty friends
 To drag him from this melancholy shore.

End of the second Act.

ACT III.

The same scene continues.

Enter Sylvia.

THRO' the befriending gloom of arching bow'rs,
Thro' walks, where never sun-beam pierc'd,
at length
I've gain'd this deep-encircled vale—ah! me!
I feel strange tremors still—she is not here ——
Mama!—where can she be?—her mournful task
Waits for her ling'ring hand——my dearest mother——
She answers not—what noise is that?—methought
I heard some steps advancing—'tis my fawn
That rustles thro' the forest glade—he stops
And looks, then runs, and stops again to take
A fearful gaze—he too perhaps has seen
These unknown beings—yonder lo! he stands
In mute expressive wonder—heav'n protect me!
—Thro' this close path, that gradual winding up
Leads on to plains, to woods, and verdant lawns
Embosom'd in the rock, I'll journey up——
The day now glows intense, but by the rills,
That thro' embow'ring groves come purling down,
I oft can lay me, and enjoy each breeze
That plays amid those craggy scenes—a noise
From yonder interwoven branches—ha!——
Ye guardian angels, save me!—see, see there—
That thing again!——

Enter Henrico.

Hen. What beauteous form in these forlorn abodes
Attracts my wond'ring eyes? ———

Sylvia. Ye heav'nly pow'rs! [*Retiring from him.*

Hen. It swims before my sight—whate'er thou art,
Virgin, or goddess—oh! a goddess sure! ———
Thou goddess of these mansions!—for thy looks
Beam heav'nly radiance, with propitious ears
Accept my supplication. ———

Sylvia. Ha!—it speaks ———
It speaks—what dost thou mean! ———

Hen. Oh! say what place,
What clime is this?—and what art thou that thus
Adorn'st this lonely mansion? ———

Sylvia. Will you first
Promise to come no nearer?

Hen. With devotion
As true as ever pilgrim offer'd up
In holy fervor to his saint,—I promise.

Sylvia. How gentle its demeanor!—tell me now
What thing thou art?

Hen. One born to misery; ———
A man, whom fate ———

Sylvia. A man!—art thou a man?

Hen. I am. ———

Sylvia. Oh! heav'ns!—a man!—protect me—save
me—— [*Runs away.*

Hen. Nay, fly me not—a sudden impulse here
Bids me pursue—forgive, thou unknown fair,
That with soft violence I thus presume
To force thee measure back thy steps again.

[*He brings her back.*

Sylvia.

Sylvia. Force me not thus, inhuman, barb'rous
What have I said?—Oh! worthy gen'rous man, [man,
Thus on my knees I beg,—have mercy on me——
—I never did you harm—indeed I did not.—

Hen. Arise, [*raises her*] thou lovely tenant of these
And let me thus,—thus as befits the man [woods,
Whose mind runs o'er with rapture and surprize,
Whose heart throbs wild with mingled doubt and joy,
Thus let me worship this celestial form,
This heav'nly brightness, to my wond'ring eyes.
That sheds such influence, as when an angel
Breaks thro' a flood of glory to the sight
Of some expiring saint, and cheers his soul.
With visions of disclosing heav'n.

Sylvia. He kneels!—
He kneels to me!—how mild his very look—
How soft each word!—are you indeed a man?—

Hen. I am, sweet saint—and one whole heart is prone
To melt at each idea beauty prints
On his delighted sense; and sure such beauty,
Touch'd by the hand of harmony, adorn'd
With inexpressive graces, well may claim
My lowliest adoration and my love.

Sylvia. This language all is new;—but still it has
I know not what of charming in't, that gains
Upon the list'ning ear—If this be falsehood,—
Then falsehood can assume a pleasing look.

Hen. Why those averted eyes?

Sylvia. What would you have?

Hen. Oh! if thou art as gracious, as thou'rt fair,
Say have you seen *Constantia*? when and where,
And how did she expire? —

Sylvia. *Constantia* lives——

Why didst thou say expire?—my mother lives,
Lives in these blest abodes.——

Hen. Ah! gentle *Sylvia*,——

So I will call thee,—daughter of *Constantia*,
Oh! fly and find her out—mean time I'll seek
Th'afflicted *Ferdinand*.——

Sylvia. What dost thou say?——

Can he, can *Ferdinand* be here?—that false,
Perfidious, barb'rous man,—can he be here?

Hen. He is, my fair; nor barbarous nor false.
Fortune that made him wretched, could no more.
Anon you'll know the whole; to waste a moment
In conf'rence now, and longer to suspend
The meeting of this pair, who now in agony
Bemoan their lot, were barbarous indeed.

Sylvia. But may I trust him? won't he do her harm?

Hen. He won't, my beauteous fair.——

Sylvia. Is he like you?——

Hen. His goodness far transcends me.——

Sylvia. Then I think

I'll venture to comply—let's go together.——

Hen. Oh! I could tend thy steps for ever; hear
Soft accents warbling from thy vermeil lip,
Watch thy mild-glancing eye; behold how grace,
Whate'er you do, which ever way you bend,
Guides each harmonious movement; but this hour
Is friendship's due; then let us instant fly
Thro' diff'rent paths—thou to seek out *Constantia*,
And I to find her husband—haply so
Their meeting will be speedier—farewell!
I'll bring him to this very spot—adieu!
For a short interval adieu, my love!

Sylvia.

Sylvia. Farewell! -- another word -- pray what's your name?

Hen. Fair excellence, *Henrico* I am call'd.

Sylvia. Pray do not tarry long, *Henrico*.——

Hen. Why

That pleasing charge, my sweet?

Sylvia. I cannot tell;

But as you're leaving me, each step you move,

My spirits sink; a melancholy gloom

Darkens the scene around, and I methinks

Helpless in solitude am left again

To wander all alone a dreary way.

Hen. Oh! I will come again, thou angel sweetness!

Yes, I will come, and at that lovely shrine

Pour out my adoration and my vows.

Yes, I will come, to part from thee no more;

A moment now farewell!-- [Exit.

Sylvia alone.

Farewell!--be sure you keep your word--He's gone,

And yet is with me still--absent I hear

And see him in his absence--still his looks

Beam with mild dignity, and still his voice

Sounds in my ear delightful--what it means,

This new-born sense, this wonderful emotion,

Unfelt till now, and mix'd of pain and joy,

I cannot guess--how my heart flutters in me!

I'll not perplex myself with vain conjecture;

Whate'er the cause, th'effect, I feel, is pleasing.

[*Constantia is heard singing within the scenes.*

Oh! heav'ns! what noise! it is my mother's voice--

Again she pours her melancholy forth,

As sweetly plaintive as when Philomel,

Beneath

Beneath some poplar shade, bemoans her young,
 And sitting pensive on the lonely bough,
 Her eye with sorrow dimm'd, she tunes her dirge,
 Warbling the night away, while all around
 The vocal woodland, and each hill and dale
 Ring with her griefs harmonious—hark!—that way
 It sounds—all gracious powr's direct me to her.

[Exit.

A short song is heard within the scenes, then enter
 Constantia.

From walk to walk, from glade to glade, o'er all
 The sea-girt isle, o'er ev'ry mountain's top,
 I roam from place to place; but oh; no place
 Affords relief to me—the sun now leads
 The sultry hours, and from his burning ray
 Each living thing retires; yet I endure
 His fiercest rage. The fever in my mind
 Heeds not external circumstance, and time
 With-holds his medicinal aid—the trees,
 And rocks themselves his pow'rful influence own;
 —All but my grief—that each succeeding day
 Sees in my heart fresh bleeding as at first.
 Delay not thus, ye cruel fates, but come
 And wrap me in eternal rest.—Till then
 Let me pursue my melancholy task.

[Works at the inscription.

Enter Ferdinand.

Ferd. Away with their ill-tim'd, officious care;
 I'll none of it—'tis cruelty, not friendship —
 'Tis misery protracted, 'tis with art,

Iahu-

Inhuman art, to lengthen out the life
Of him who groans in torment--no-- they never shall
Compell me back to a base world again!
I've liv'd enough--my course is ended here--
For here *Constantia* lies--ye heav'nly pow'rs!
What means upon yon consecrated ground
That visionary form, with lifted arm
And gleaming steel, that seems in act to carve
The rugged stone?—

Const. What is't I hear!--a voice!
A groan!--from whence--ha!

[*Seeing Ferdinand.*

Ferd. 'Tis, it is her ghost,
Her discontented shade that hovers still
About this place.

Const. Avaunt, thou air-drawn shape
Of that perfidious--ah!-- [She faints away.

Ferd. Leave me not thus--
Oh! ever gracious, ever gentle, say--
'Tis gone--in sudden silence gone! —

Enter Henrico.

Hen. Quick let me find him, to his raptur'd ear
[*Laying hold of Ferdinand.*
Give the delightful tidings--ha!

Ferd. And thus
I sink at once and follow my beloved,

[*Falls into Henrico's arms.*

Hen. He faints--He faints--the chilling dews of
Distil thro' every pore--my Ferdinand, [death
Awake, arise, and hear the joyful sounds
Of happiness restor'd--His eyes unfold

To

To seek fair day light, and now close again
As if they sicken'd at the view——

Ferd. Forbear,
And let me die!——

Hen. *Constantia* lives—she lives
Once more to fold thee in her warm embrace.

Ferd. I saw her fleeting ghost—sullen and pale
It vanish'd from my sight——

Const. Haunt me not thus
Thou cruel tyrant form!— [Coming to herself.

Hen. Whence is that voice?
Oh heav'ns—*Constantia* there!——she too entranc'd
Lies stretch'd upon the ground——

Ferd. Where is *Constantia*?
Oh! let me fly to her embrace—'tis she—
It is my wife!—it is *Constantia*!—still,
—Oh! ecstasy of bliss!—she still survives——

Const. 'Tis mere illusion all;—the false creation
Of some deceitful dream——

Ferd. 'Tis real all ——
Again I fold her thus—the known embrace
Hath thrill'd its wonted transport to my heart.
My life, my soul, thy Ferdinand is come.

Const. And com'st thou then, inhuman as thou art,
Com'st thou again to wreak thy falsehood on me?

Ferd. By heav'n I ne'er was false—dash not my joys
With thy unkind suspicion of my love,
While thus transported far above the lot
Of human bliss, I press my lips to thine,
Inhaling balmy sweets, and all my soul
Runs o'er with joy, with wonder, and delight.

Const. Did'st thou not meanly leave me here a prey?

Ferd. And can *Constantia* deem me then so base?

Can

Can she believe me such a vile betrayer?

—Can'st thou? —

Const. On this unhospitable shore
Left as I was——

Ferd. Oh! misery!—thou we'rt,
While I was dragg'd by an insidious band
Of pirates, savage blood-hounds! into bondage.
But witness heav'n!—witness ye midnight hours
That heard my ceaseless groans, how her dear image
Grew to my very heart!——

Const. And hast thou then
Been doom'd to slavery?

Ferd. I have.

Const. And groan'd
This long, long time beneath oppression's hand?

Ferd. E'er since these eyes have gaz'd delighted on
The bitter draught of misery was mine. [thee,

Const. And wert thou true indeed?

Ferd. By heav'n I was.

Const. And have I then accus'd thee?—have I pour'd
A thousand strong complaints against thee?—called
High judging heav'n to witness to my wrongs,
Told all these wilds, these rocks, these wood-crown'd
Of injur'd truth and violated love? [hills
Falsely I talk'd, unjustly I complain'd.
Of injur'd truth and violated love.

My *Ferdinand* was true—again 'tis giv'n
With his lov'd form to glad these eyes, to rush
With eager transport to his fond embrace,
To cling around his neck, and growing to him
Pour the warm tears of rapture and of love.

[*They embrace,*

Enter

Enter Sylvia.

Sylvia. I heard my mother's voice—what do I see?
In a man's arms!—embracing and embrac'd!

Ferd. Is that my *Sylvia*?—oh! it must be so——
My child, my child survives!—survives to take
A raptur'd father's blessing, and o'erpay
His suff'rings past by his excess of joy,
This interview of mingled tears and kisses.

[*Embraces her.*

Sylvia. How gentle his deportment too!—I feel
A soft attraction bind my soul to his.

Mama, are these the men, whom you describ'd
Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers? —

Const. I was deceiv'd myself, my child; for truth,
Honour, and love, and constancy are theirs.
I now have proof of unexampled goodness.

Sylvia. Indeed I strongly thought you wrong'd 'em
When first *Henrico* met my wond'ring eyes. [much,

Ferd. *Henrico* is my friend, my best, *Constantia*,
And thou hereafter shalt know all his virtues.

Sylvia. And shall I know him too? —

Hen. Thou shalt;—and I

Will live thy slave, if thou wilt deign to love me.

Sylvia. Love you!—I know not what you mean by
But if with pleasure to behold thee; if [love;
To hang upon thy words; to mourn thy absence;
With joy to meet again, and feel my heart
Form new desires, and wish it knows not what,
If that be love—I do already love you——
I love you better than my fawn.

Hen. How sweet

The voice of innocence—oh! thou shalt be,—

—My

My friend will smile consent,—yes, thou fair nymph,
Shalt be my bride ———

Sylvia. Your bride!—what's that?

Hen. My wife.——

Sylvia. No, Sir, not that.—I crave your pardon
—I beg to be excus'd—I do not chuse [there—
To be left helpless on a desert island.

Const. Thy father did not leave me, *Sylvia*;—no;—
He could not prove deliberately false.
His heart was unsusceptible of fraud.——
—Anon you'll know it all.——

Hen. Mean time, my fair,
Banish thy fears; and let me with this kiss
On the white softness of this lovely hand,
For ever dedicate my heart.

Sylvia. Oh! heav'ns!
What must I do, Mama?——

Const. Requite his love
With fair return of thine.——

Sylvia. Must I do so!——
The task appears not undelightful—yes;
To thee I can resign myself—but tell me;
Wilt thou ne'er leave me? wilt thou ever here
Fix thy abode?——

Hen. No;—we'll convey thee hence,
To the soft influence of a milder clime:
There, like a flow'r transplanted, thou shalt flourish,
And ne'er regret this warmer southern sky,
But thrive and ripen, to the wond'ring world
Unfolding all thy sweets to higher bloom.

Sylvia. What place is that?—and whither will ye
bear me?

Ferd. To thy dear native soil—to England, love.—

Sylvia. To England;

Hen. Yes! the land of beauteous dames :
 'Mongst whom thy matchless excellence shall shine
 With undiminish'd radiance, and exert
 It's gentle pow'r, by innocence endear'd,
 By virtue heighten'd, and by modest truth
 Attemper'd to such sweetness, that each fair
 With unrepining heart, and glad consent
 Shall own thy rival claim; and ev'ry youth
 Touch'd by the graces of thy native beauty,
 Shall join to make thy form the public care.

Sylvia. I cannot quit this island ;—cannot leave
These woods, these lawns, these hills and deep'ning
vales,

These streams oft-visited, each well-known haunt
Where hand in hand with innocence I've stray'd,
And tasted joys serene as in the air,
That pants upon yon trembling leaves.——

Ferd. Such joys
For thee shall blossom in thy native land,
And new delights arise — There cultur'd fields
Wave with the golden harvest; commerce pours
Each delicacy forth; there stately domes
Attract the wond'ring eye; there cities swarm
With busy throngs intense, and smiles around
A scene of active, cheerful, social life.
Thither I'll lead thee, sweet. —

Sylvia. And yet my heart
Mistakes me much:—does not contention there,
And civil discord render life a scene
Of care, and toil, and struggle?—does not war
From foreign nations oft invade the land,
With all his train of misery and death?

Ferd.

Ferd. Thy lovely fears are groundless—ours the
 Where inward peace diffuses smiles around, [land
 And scatters wide her blessings—there a king,——
 (My friend comes later thence, and tells me all)
 There reigns a happy venerable king,
 Dispensing justice and maintaining laws
 That bind alike his people and himself.
 From that source liberty and ev'ry claim
 A free-born people boast, flow equal on
 And harmonize the state; while in the eve
 And calm decline of life our monarch sees
 A royal grandson still to higher lustre
 Each day expanding; emulous to trace
 His grandfire's steps, to copy out his actions;
 And bid the ray of freedom onward stretch
 To ages yet unborn.

Sylvia. And do the people
 Know their own happiness?

Ferd. They do, my sweet:
 Pleas'd they behold their native rights secur'd;
 Their commerce guarded, and the useful arts,
 That raise, that soften, and embellish life,
 All to perfection rising. With a sense
 Of their own blessing touch'd, with one consent
 They pour their treasures, and exhaust their blood
 In their king's righteous cause; and *Albion* thus
 Raises her envied head; thus ev'ry threat
 Of foreign force, each menace of invasion
 From a vain, vanquish'd, disappointed foe,
 Like broken billows on her craggy cliffs,
 Shall murmur at her feet in vain.——

Sylvia. Methinks
 I long to see this place.——

Ferd. My Sylvia, yes,
Thou shalt return—propitious gales invite—
Come then, *Constantia*—oh! what mix'd emotions
Heave in this bosom at the sight of thee?—

Const. I too run o'er with ecstasy of joy,
And tears must speak my happiness.—I long
To utter all my fond, fond thoughts;—to tell
The story of my woes, and hear of thine;
While at each word our hearts shall melt within us,
And thrill with grief, with tenderness, and love.

Ferd. The tale shall serve us in our future hours
Of tender intercourse, to sweeten pain,
To calm adversity, and teach our souls
To bend in love, in gratitude, and praise
To the All-good on high, who thus befriends
The cause of innocence; who thus rewards
Our suffering constancy; whose hand, tho' slow,
Thus leads to rapture thro' a train of woe.

F I N I S.

T H E
G R A V E.

A
P O E M.

By ROBERT BLAIR.

The house appointed for all living. Job.

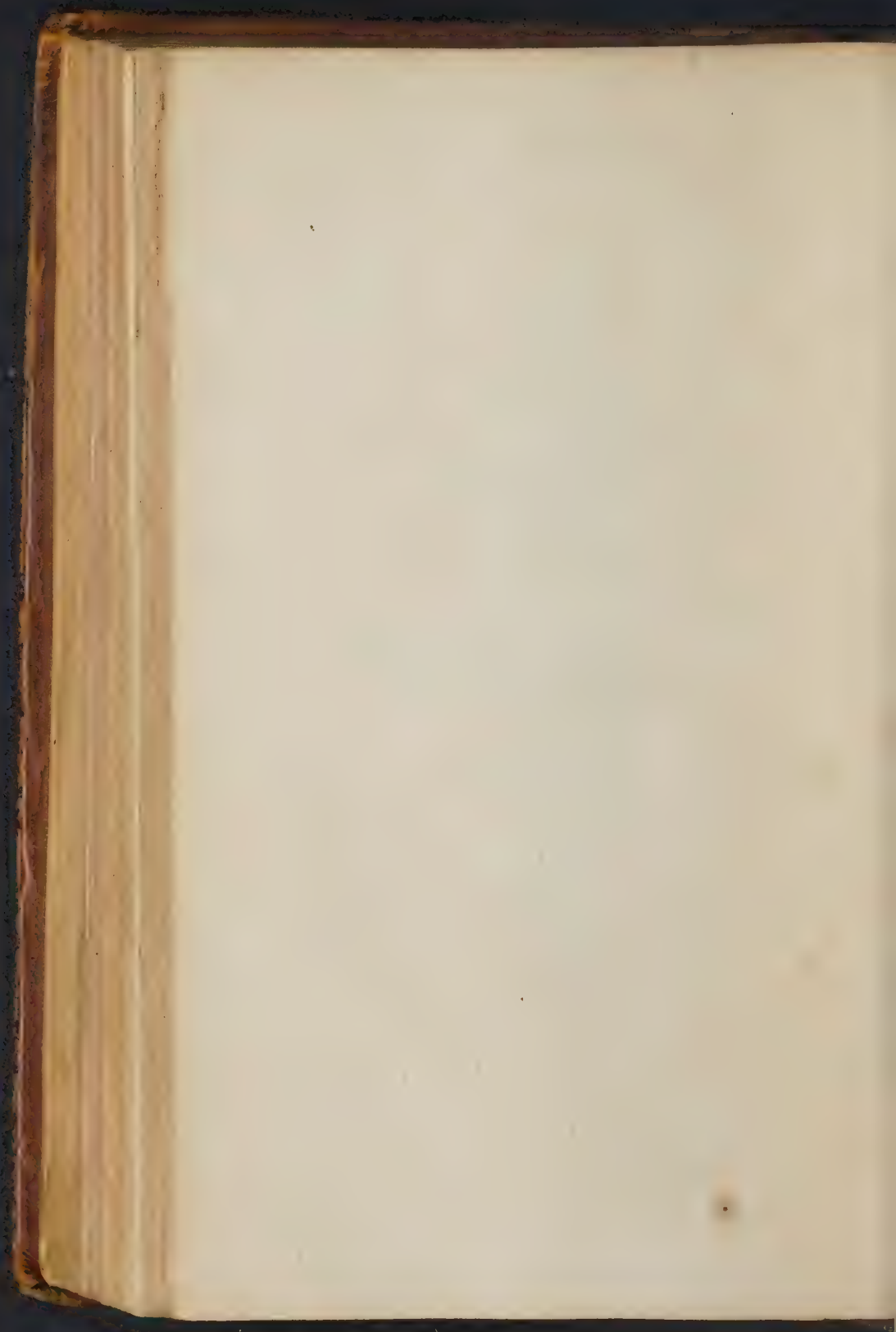
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T H E
G R A V E.

A
P O E M.

WHILST some affect the sun, and
some the shade,
Some flee the city, some the hermi-
tage ;

Their aims as various, as the roads they take
In journeying thro' life ; — the task be mine
To paint the gloomy horrors of the *Tomb* ;
Th' appointed place of rendezvous, where all
These travellers meet. — Thy succours I implore,
Eternal King ! whose potent arm sustains

The keys of hell and death.—THE GRAVE,
dread thing !

Men shiver, when thou'rt nam'd : Nature appall'd
Shakes off her wonted firmness.—Ah ! how dark
Thy long-extended realms, and rueful wastes !
Where nought but Silence reigns, and Night, dark
Night,

Dark as was *Chaos*, ere the infant Sun
Was roll'd together, or had try'd his beams
Athwart the gloom profound.—The sickly taper,
By glimmering thro' thy low-brow'd misty vaults,
(Furr'd round with mouldy damps, and ropy slime,)
Lets fall a supernumerary horror,
And only serves to make thy night more irksome.
Well do I know thee by thy trusty *Tew*,
Chearless, unsocial plant ; that loves to dwell
'Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms :
Where light-heel'd ghosts, and visionary shades,
Beneath the wan cold moon (as fame reports)
Embody'd, thick, perform their mystic rounds.
No other merriment, dull tree, is thine.

See yonder hallow'd Fane; — the pious work
Of names once fam'd, now dubious or forgot,
And bury'd 'midst the wreck of things which were :
There lie interr'd the more illustrious dead.
The wind is up : hark ! how it howls ! Methinks
Till now I never heard a sound so dreary :
Doors creak, and windows clap, and night's foul
bird

Rook'd in the spire, screams loud : the gloomy files
Black-plaster'd, and hung round with shreds of
'scutcheons

And tatter'd coats of arms, fend back the found
Laden with heavier airs, from the low vaults
The mansions of the dead.—Rous'd from their
 slumbers,

In grim Array the grisly spectres rise,
Grin horrible, and obstinately sullen
Pass and repass, hush'd as the foot of Night.
Again the screech-owl shrieks : ungracious sound !
I'll hear no more, it makes one's blood run chill.

Quite round the pile, a row of reverend elms,
(Coæval

(Coæval near with that,) all ragged shew
 Long lash'd by the rude winds. Some rift half down
 Their branchless trunks: others so thin a top,
 That scarce two crows can lodge in the same tree.
 Strange things, the neighbours say, have happen'd
 here :

Wild shrieks have issu'd from the hollow tombs ;
 Dead men have come again, and walk'd about ;
 And the great bell has toll'd, unring, untouch'd.
 (Such tales their chear, at Wake or Gossiping,
 When it draws near to witching time of night.)

Oft, in the lone church-yard at night I've seen
 By glimpse of moon-shine, chequering thro' the trees,
 The school-boy with his satchel in his hand,
 Whistling aloud to bear his courage up,
 And lightly tripping o'er the long flat stones,
 (With nettles skirted, and with moss o'ergrown,)
 That tell in homely phrase who lie below.
 Sudden he starts, and hears, or thinks he hears
 The sound of something purring at his heels :
 Full fast he flies, and dares not look behind him,
 Till

Till out of breath he overtakes his fellows ;
 Who gather round, and wonder at the tale
 Of horrid *Apparition*, tall and ghastly,
 That walks at dead of night, or takes his stand
 O'er some new-open'd grave ; and (strange to tell !)
 Evanishes at crowing of the cock.

The new-made *Widow* too, I've sometimes 'spy'd,
 Sad sight ! slow moving o'er the prostrate dead :
 Listless, she crawls along in doleful black,
 Whilst bursts of sorrow gush from either eye,
 Fast falling down her now untasted cheek.
 Prone on the lowly grave of the dear man
 She drops ; whilst busy meddling Memory,
 In barbarous succession, musters up
 The past endearments of their softer hours,
 Tenacious of its theme. Still, still she thinks
 She sees him, and indulging the fond thought,
 Clings yet more closely to the senseless turf,
 Nor heeds the passenger who looks that way.

Invidious *Grave*—how dost thou rend in sunder

Whom

Whom Love has knit, and Sympathy made one ?
A tie more stubborn far than Nature's band.

✕ *Friendship!* mysterious cement of the soul ;
Sweetner of life, and solder of society ;
I owe thee much. Thou hast deserv'd from me,
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay.
Oft have I prov'd the labours of thy love,
And the warm efforts of the gentle heart,
Anxious to please.—✕ Oh ! when my friend and I
In some thick wood have wander'd heedless on,
Hid from the vulgar eye ; and sat us down
Upon the sloping cowslip-cover'd bank,
Where the pure limpid stream has slid along
In grateful errors thro' the under-wood,
Sweet-murmuring : methought the shrill-tongu'd

Thrush

Mended his song of love ; the sooty Black-bird
Mellow'd his pipe, and soften'd ev'ry note :
The Eglantine smell'd sweeter, and the Rose
Assum'd a dye more deep ; whilst ev'ry flower
Vy'd with its fellow-plant in luxury
Of dress.—Oh ! then, the longest summer's day
Seem'd

Seem'd too too much in haste: still the full heart
 Had not imparted half: 'Twas happiness
 Too exquisite to last. Of joys departed
 Not to return, how painful the remembrance !

Dull *Grave*—thou spoil'st the dance of youthful
 blood,
 Strik'st out the dimple from the cheek of Mirth,
 And ev'ry smirking feature from the face ;
 Branding our *laughter* with the name of *madness*.
 Where are the *Jesters* now ? the men of health
 Complexionally pleasant ? Where the *Droll*
 Whose ev'ry look and gesture was a joke
 To clapping theatres and shouting crouds,
 And made even thick-lip'd musing Melancholy
 To gather up her face into a smile
 Before she was aware ? Ah ! sullen now,
 And dumb, as the green turf that covers them.

Where are the mighty thunderbolts of war ?
 The *Roman Cæsars*, and the *Græcian Chiefs*,
 The boast of story ? Where the hot-brain'd youth ?

B

Who

Who the *Tiara* at his pleasure tore
 From Kings of all the then discover'd globe;
 And cry'd, forsooth, because his arm was hamper'd,
 And had not room enough to do its work?
 Alas! how slim, dishonourably slim,
 And cramm'd into a space we blush to name!
 Proud *Royalty*! how alter'd in thy looks!
 How blank thy features, and how wan thy hue!
Son of the morning! whither art thou gone?
 Where hast thou hid thy many-spangled head,
 And the majestic menace of thine eyes
 Felt from afar? Pliant and powerless now,
 Like new-born infant wound up in his swathes,
 Or victim tumbled flat upon its back,
 That throbs beneath the sacrificer's knife.
 Mute, must thou bear the strife of little tongues,
 And coward insults of the base-born croud;
 That grudge a privilege, thou never hadst,
 But only hop'd for in the peaceful *Grave*,
 Of being unmolested and alone.
Arabia's gums and odoriferous drugs,
 And honours by the *Heralds* duly paid

In mode and form, ev'n to a very scruple;
 Oh cruel *Irony* ! These come too late;
 And only mock, whom they were meant to honour.
 Surely there's not a dungeon-flave, that's bury'd
 In the high-way, unshrouded and uncoffin'd,
 But lies as soft, and sleeps as found as he.
 Sorry Pre-eminence of high descent
 Above the vulgar born, to rot in state.

But see! the well-plum'd *Herse* comes nodding on
 Stately and slow; and properly attended
 By the whole fable tribe, that painful watch
 The sick man's door, and live upon the dead,
 By letting out their persons by the hour,
 To mimic sorrow, when the heart's not sad.
 How rich the trappings ! now they're all unfurl'd,
 And glittering in the sun; triumphant entries
 Of Conquerors, and Coronation-pomps,
 In glory scarce exceed. Great gluts of people
 Retard th' unwieldy show; whilst from the casements
 And houses tops, ranks behind ranks close wedg'd
 Hang belying o'er. But tell us, why this waste ?

Why this ado in earthing up a Carcase
 That's fall'n into disgrace, and in the nostril
 Smells horrible?—Ye *Undertakers* tell us,
 'Midst all the gorgeous figures you exhibit,
 Why is the principal conceal'd, for which
 You make this mighty stir?—'Tis wisely done:
 What would offend the eye in a good picture,
 The painter casts discreetly into shades.

Proud *Lineage*, now how little thou appear'st
 Below the envy of the private man.
Honour, that meddlesome officious ill,
 Pursues thee ev'n to death; nor there stops short.
 Strange persecution! when the *Grave* itself
 Is no protection from rude sufferance.

Aburd to think to over-reach the *Grave*,
 And from the wreck of names to rescue ours.
 The best concerted schemes men lay for fame
 Die fast away: only themselves die faster.
 The far-fam'd *Sculptor*, and the laurell'd *Bard*,
 Those bold insurers of deathless fame,

Supply

Supply their little feeble aids in vain.

The tapering *Pyramid*, th' *Egyptian's* pride
 And wonder of the world ; whose spiky top
 Has wounded the thick cloud, and long out-liv'd
 The angry shaking of the winter's storm :
 Yet spent at last by th' injuries of heaven,
 Shatter'd with age, and furrow'd o'er with years,
 The mystic cone with hieroglyphics crusted,
 At once gives way. Oh ! lamentable sight :
 The labour of whole ages, lumbers down,
 A hideous and mishapen length of ruins.
 Sepulchral columns wrestle but in vain
 With all-subduing Time : her cank'ring hand
 With calm deliberate malice wasteth them :
 Worn on the edge of days the brass consumes,
 The busto moulders, and the deep-cut marble
 Unsteady to the steel, gives up its charge.
Ambition half convicted of her folly,
 Hangs down the head, and reddens at the tale.

Here all the mighty *Troublers of the earth*,
 Who swam to sov'reign rule thro' seas of blood ;
 Th' op-

Th' oppressive, sturdy, man-destroying Villains,
 Who ravag'd kingdoms and laid empires waste,
 And in a cruel wantonness of power
 Thinn'd states of half their people, and gave up
 To want, the rest: now, like a storm that's spent,
 Lie hush'd, and meanly sneak behind the covert.
 Vain thought! to hide them from the general scorn,
 That haunts, and doggs them like an injur'd ghost
 Implacable.—Here too the *petty Tyrant*,
 Whose scant domains *Geographer* ne'er notic'd,
 And well for neighbouring grounds, of arm as short;
 Who fix'd his iron talons on the poor,
 And grip'd them like some lordly beast of prey;
 Deaf to the forceful cries of gnawing Hunger,
 And piteous plaintive voice of Misery:
 (As if a *Slave* was not a shred of nature,
 Of the same common nature with his *Lord*):
 Now tame and humble, like a child that's whipp'd,
 Shakes hands with dust, and calls the worm his
 kinsman;
 Nor pleads his rank and birthright.—Under ground
Precedency's

Precedency's a jest ; Vassal and Lord
Grossly familiar, side by side consume.

When self-esteem, or others adulation,
Would cunningly persuade us we were something
Above the common level of our kind ;
The *Grave* gainsays the smooth-complexion'd flatt'ry,
And with blunt truth acquaints us what we are.

X *Beauty*—thou pretty play-thing, dear deceit;
That steals so softly o'er the stripling's heart,
And gives it a new pulse, unknown before,
The *Grave* discredits thee : thy charms expung'd,
Thy roses faded, and thy lilies soild,
What hast thou more to boast of ? Will thy Lovers
Flock round thee now, to gaze and do thee homage ?
Methinks I see thee with thy head low laid,
Whilst surfeited upon thy damask cheek
The high-fed *Worm*, in lazy volumes roll'd,
Riots unscar'd.—For this, was all thy caution ?
For this, thy painful labours at thy glass ?
T' improve those charms, and keep them in repair,
For

For which the spoiler thanks thee not. Foul feeder,
 Coarse fare and carrion please thee full as well,
 And leave as keen a relish on the sense.
 Look how the fair one weeps!—the conscious tears
 Stand thick as dew-drops on the bells of flow'rs :
 Honest effusion! the swoln heart in vain
 Works hard to put a gloss on its distress.

Strength too—thou furly, and less gentle boast
 Of those that laugh loud at the village-ring :
 A fit of common sickness pulls thee down
 With greater ease, than e'er thou didst the stripling,
 That rashly dar'd thee to th' unequal fight.
 What groan was that I heard?—Deep groan indeed!
 With anguish heavy laden ; let me trace it :
 From yonder bed it comes, where the strong man,
 By stronger arm belabour'd, gasps for breath,
 Like a hard-hunted beast. How his great heart
 Beats thick ! his roomy chest by far too scant
 To give the lungs full play.—What now avail
 The strong-built sinewy limbs, and well-spread
 shoulders ?

See !

See how he tugs for life, and lays about him,
 Mad with his pain!—Eager he catches hold
 Of what comes next to hand, and grasps it hard,
 Just like a creature drowning; hideous sight!
 Oh! how his eyes stand out, and stare full ghastly!
 Whilst the distemper's rank and deadly venom
 Shoots like a burning arrow cross his bowels,
 And drinks his marrow up.—Heard you that groan?
 It was his last.—See how the great *Goliath*,
 Just like a child that brawl'd itself to rest,
 Lies still.—What mean'st thou then, O mighty

Boaster,

To vaunt of nerves of thine? What means the Bull,
 Unconscious of his strength, to play the coward,
 And flee before a feeble thing like man;
 That knowing well the slackness of his arm,
 Trufts only in the well-invented knife?

With *study* pale, and midnight vigils spent,
 The star-surveying *Sage*, close to his eye
 Applies the fight-invigorating Tube;
 And travelling thro' the boundless length of space,

C

Marks

Marks well the courses of the far-seen orbs,
 That roll with regular confusion there,
 In ecstasy of thought. But ah! proud Man,
 Great heights are hazardous to the weak head :
 Soon, very soon, thy firmest footing fails ;
 And down thou dropp'st into that darksome place,
 Where *nor device, nor knowledge* ever came.

Here the *Tongue-Warrior* lies, disabled now,
 Disarm'd, dishonour'd, like a wretch that's gagg'd,
 And cannot tell his ail to passers by.
 Great man of language,—whence this mighty change?
 This dumb despair, and drooping of the head?
 Tho' strong Persuasion hung upon thy lip,
 And sly Insinuation's softer arts
 In ambush lay about thy flowing Tongue ;
 Alas! how chop-fall'n now? Thick mists and silence
 Rest, like a weary cloud, upon thy breast
 Unceasing.—Ah! where is the lifted arm,
 The strength of action, and the force of words,
 The well-turn'd period, and the well-tun'd voice,
 With all the lesser ornaments of Phrase?

Ah!

Ah ! fled for ever, as they ne'er had been,
 Raz'd from the book of Fame: or more provoking,
 Perchance some hackney hunger-bitten Scribbler
 Insults thy memory, and blots thy tomb
 With long flat narrative, or duller rhimes,
 With heavy halting pace that drawl along ;
 Enough to rouse a dead man into rage,
 And warm with red Resentment the wan Cheek.

Here the great masters of the *Healing-art*,
 These mighty mock-defrauders of the *Tomb*,
 Spite of their *Juleps* and *Catholicons*
 Refign to Fate.—Proud *Æsculapius*' son !
 Where are thy boasted implements of Art,
 And all thy well-cramm'd magazines of Health ?
 Nor Hill, nor Vale, as far as ship could go,
 Nor margin of the gravel-bottom'd Brook,
 Escap'd thy rifling hand :—from stubborn shrubs
 Thou wrung'st their shy-retiring Virtues out,
 And vex'd them in the fire : nor fly, nor insect,
 Nor writhy snake, escap'd thy deep research.
 But why this *apparatus* ? why this cost ?

Tell us, thou doughty keeper from the *Grave*,
 Where are thy *Recipe's* and *Cordials* now,
 With the long list of vouchers for thy cures ?
 Alas ! thou speakest not.—The bold impostor
 Looks not more filly, when the cheat's found out.

Here the lank-sided *Miser*, worst of felons,
 Who meanly stole, (discreditable shift,)
 From back, and belly too, their proper cheer ;
 Eas'd of a tax, it irk'd the wretch to pay
 To his own carcase ; now lies cheaply lodg'd,
 By clam'rous Appetites no longer teaz'd,
 Nor tedious Bills of charges and repairs.
 But ah ! where are his rents, his comings-in ?
 Ay ! now you've made the rich man poor indeed.
Robb'd of his Gods, what has he left behind ?
 Oh ! curst lust of Gold ; when for thy sake,
 The fool throws up his Int'rest in both Worlds :
 First starv'd in this, then damn'd in that to come.

How shocking must thy summons be, O *Death* !
 To him that is at ease in his possessions ;

Who

Who counting on long years of pleasure here,
 Is quite unfurnish'd for that world to come?
 In that dread moment, how the frantic Soul
 Raves round the walls of her clay Tenement,
 Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
 But shrieks in vain! — How wishfully she looks
 On all she's leaving, now no longer her's!
 A little longer, yet a little longer.

Oh! might she stay, to wash away her stains,
 And fit her for her passage.—Mournful sight!
 Her very eyes weep blood; — and every Groan
 She heaves is big with horror.—But the Foe,
 Like a stanch murd'rer, steady to his purpose,
 Pursues her close through ev'ry lane of Life,
 Nor misses once the track, but presses on;
 Till forc'd at last to the tremendous Verge,
 At once she sinks to everlasting ruin.

Sure 'tis a serious thing *to die!* My soul,
 What a strange moment must it be, when near
 Thy journey's end, thou hast the gulf in view!
 That awful gulf, no mortal e'er repass'd

To

To tell what's doing on the other side.
 Nature runs back, and shudders at the sight,
 And every life-string bleeds at thoughts of parting ;
 For part they must : *Body* and *Soul* must part ;
 Fond couple ; link'd more close than wedded pair.
This, wings its way to its almighty Source,
 The Witness of its actions, now its Judge ;
That, drops into the dark and noisome *Grave*,
 Like a disabled pitcher of no use.

If *Death* was nothing, and nought *after death* ;
 If when men dy'd, at once they ceas'd to be,
 Returning to the barren womb of Nothing,
 Whence first they sprung ; then might the Debauchee
 Untrembling mouth the Heavens : — Then might the
 Drunkard

Reel over his full bowl, and when 'tis drain'd,
 Fill up another to the brim, and laugh
 At the poor bugbear *Death* : — Then might the Wretch
 That's weary of the world, and tir'd of life,
 At once give each inquietude the slip,
 By stealing out of being, when he pleas'd,

And

And by what way ; whether by hemp, or steel.
Death's thousand doors stand open.—Who could force
 The ill-pleas'd guest to sit out his full time,
 Or blame him if he goes?—Sure he does well,
 That helps himself, as timely as he can,
 When able.—But if there is an *Hereafter*,
 And that there is, Conscience, uninfluenc'd
 And suffer'd to speak out, tells ev'ry man ;
 Then must it be an awful thing *to die* :
 More horrid yet, to die by one's own hand.
Self-murder !—name it not : our island's shame :
 That makes her the reproach of neighbouring states.
 Shall Nature, swerving from her earliest dictate
 Self-preservation, fall by her own act ?
 Forbid it Heaven !—Let not, upon disgust,
 The shameless hand be foully crimson'd o'er
 With blood of its own lord.—Dreadful attempt !
 Just reeking from self-slaughter, in a rage
 To rush into the presence of our Judge ;
 As if we challeng'd him to do his worst,
 And matter'd not his wrath.—Unheard-of tortures
 Must be reserv'd for such : these herd together ;

The

The common Damn'd shun their society,
 And look upon themselves as Fiends less foul.
 Our time is fix'd, and all our days are number'd ;
 How long, how short, we know not :—this we know,
 Duty requires we calmly wait the summons,
 Nor dare to stir till Heav'n shall give permission :
 Like Centries that must keep their destin'd stand,
 And wait th' appointed hour, till they're reliev'd.
 Those only are the Brave, that keep their ground,
 And keep it to the last. To run away,
 Is but a coward's trick : to run away
 From this world's ills, that at the very worst
 Will soon blow o'er, thinking to mend ourselves
 By boldly vent'ring on a world unknown,
 And plunging headlong in the dark ;—'tis mad :
 No frenzy half so desperate as this.

Tell us, ye Dead ; will none of you, in pity
 To those you left behind, disclose the secret ?
 Oh ! that some courteous ghost would blab it out :
 What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be.
 I've heard, that souls departed, have sometimes

Forewarn'd

Forewarn'd men of their death:—'Twas kindly done
 To knock, and give the alarm.—But what means
 This stinted charity?—'Tis but lame kindness
 That does its work by halves.—Why might you not
 Tell us what 'tis *to die*?—Do the strict laws
 Of your society forbid your speaking
 Upon a point so nice?—I'll ask no more:
 Sullen, like lamps in sepulchres, your shine
 Enlightens but yourselves. Well,—'tis no matter;
 A very little time will clear up all,
 And make us learn'd as you are, and as close.

Death's shafts fly thick:—Here falls the Village-
 swain,

And there his pamper'd Lord.—The cup goes round;
 And who so artful as to put it by?
 'Tis long since *Death* had the majority;
 Yet strange! *the Living lay it not to heart*.
 See yonder maker of the dead man's bed,
 The *Sexton*, hoary-headed chronicle,
 Of hard unmeaning face, down which ne'er stole
 A gentle Tear; with mattoc in his hand

D

Digs

Digs through whole rows of Kindred and Acquaintance,

By far his Juniors.—Scarce a scull's cast up,
But well he knew its Owner, and can tell
Some passage of his life.—Thus hand in hand
The sot has walk'd with *Death* twice twenty years;
And yet, ne'er Yonker on the green laughs louder,
Or clubs a smuttier tale:—When Drunkards meet,
None sings a merrier catch, or lends a hand
More willing to his cup.—Poor wretch! he minds
not,

That soon some trusty Brother of the trade
Shall do for him what he has done for thousands.

On this side, and on that, men see their friends
Drop off, like leaves in autumn; yet lanch out
Into fantastic schemes, which the long Livers
In the world's hale and undegenerate days,
Could scarce have leisure for.—Fools that we are,
Never to think of *Death* and of *ourselves*
At the same time: as if to learn *to die*
Were no concern of ours—Oh! more than sottish,
For

For creatures of a Day in gamesome mood,
 To frolic on Eternity's dread brink
 Unapprehensive ; when, for ought we know,
 The very first swollen Surge shall sweep us in.
 Think we, or think we not, *Time* hurries on
 With a resistless unremitting stream ;
 Yet treads more soft than e'er did midnight-thief,
 That slides his hand under the Miser's pillow,
 And carries off his prize.—What is *this World* ?
 What ? but a spacious *burial-field* unwall'd,
 Strew'd with Death's spoils, the spoils of animals
 Savage and tame, and full of dead mens bones.
 The very turf on which we tread, once liv'd :
 And we that live must lend our carcases
 To cover our own offspring :—In their turns
 They too must cover theirs.—'Tis *here* all meet :
 The shiv'ring *Icelander*, and sun-burnt *Moor* ;
 Men of all climes, that never met before ;
 And of all creeds, the *Jew*, the *Turk*, and *Christian*.
Here the proud *Prince*, and *Favourite* yet prouder,
 His Sov'reign's keeper, and the People's scourge,
 Are huddled out of sight.—*Here* lie abash'd

The great *Negotiators* of the earth,
 And celebrated *Masters of the balance*,
 Deep read in stratagems, and wiles of courts.
 Now vain their *Treaty-skill* :—Death scorns to treat.
Here the o'erloaded *Slave* flings down his burden
 From his gall'd shoulders ;—and when the cruel
 Tyrant,

With all his guards and tools of pow'r about him,
 Is meditating new unheard-of hardships,
 Mocks his short arm ;—and quick as thought, escapes,
 Where Tyrants vex not, and the Weary rest.
Here the warm *Lover*, leaving the cool shade,
 The tell-tale Echo, and the babbling stream,
 (Time out of mind the favo'rite seats of Love,)
 Fast by his gentle Mistress lays him down
 Unblasted by foul tongue.—*Here* friends and foes
 Lie close ; unmindful of their former feuds.
 The lawn-rob'd *Prelate*, and plain *Presbyter*,
 E'er while that stood aloof, as shy to meet,
 Familiar mingle *here*, like sister-streams
 That some rude interposing rock had split.
Here is the large-limb'd *Peasant* :—*Here* the *Child*

Of

Of a span long, that never saw the sun,
 Nor press'd the nipple, strangled in Life's porch.
Here is the *Mother* with her sons and daughters;
 The barren *Wife*; and long-demurring *Maid*,
 Whose lonely unappropriated sweets
 Smil'd like yon knot of cowslips on the cliff,
 Not to be come at by the willing hand.
Here are the *Prude* severe, and gay *Coquet*,
 The sober *Widow*, and the young green *Virgin*,
 Cropp'd like a rose, before 'tis fully blown,
 Or half its worth disclos'd.—Strange medley *here*!
Here garrulous *Old Age* winds up his tale;
 And jovial *Youth* of lightsome vacant heart,
 Whose ev'ry day was made of melody,
 Hears not the voice of mirth:—The shrill-tongu'd
 Shrew,

Meek as the turtle-dove, forgets her chiding.

Here are the wise, the generous, and the brave;
 The just, the good, the worthless, the profane,
 The downright clown, and perfectly well-bred;
 The fool, the churl, the scoundrel, and the mean,
 The supple statesman, and the patriot stern;

The

The wrecks of Nations, and the spoils of Time,
With all the lumber of fix thousand years.

Poor *Man!*—how happy once in thy *first state!*
When yet but warm from thy great Maker's hand,
He stamp'd thee with his image, and well pleas'd
Smil'd on his last fair work.—Then all was well.
Sound was the *Body*, and the *Soul* serene;
Like two sweet instruments, ne'er out of tune,
That play their several parts.—Nor head, nor heart,
Offer'd to ache :—Nor was there cause they should ;
For all was pure within :—No fell remorse,
Nor anxious castings-up of what might be,
Alarm'd his peaceful bosom :—Summer seas
Shew not more smooth, when kiss'd by southern
winds

Just ready to expire.—Scarce importun'd,
The generous soil, with a luxurious hand,
Offer'd the various produce of the year,
And ev'ry thing most perfect in its kind.
Blessed! thrice blessed days!—But ah! how short!
Bless'd as the pleasing dreams of Holy Men ;

But

But fugitive like those, and quickly gone.
 Oh! slipp'ry state of things.—What sudden turns?
 What strange vicissitudes, in the first leaf
 Of man's sad history?—To-day most happy,
 And ere to-morrow's sun has set, most abject.
 How scant the space between these vast extremes!
 Thus far'd it with *our Sire*:—Not long h' enjoy'd
 His paradise.—Scarce had the happy tenant
 Of the fair spot, due time to prove its sweets,
 Or sum them up; when strait he must be gone,
 Ne'er to return again.—And must he go?
 Can nought compound for the first dire offence
 Of erring man?—Like one that is condemn'd,
 Fain would he trifle time with idle talk,
 And parley with his fate.—But 'tis in vain.
 Not all the lavish odours of the place
 Offer'd in incense can procure his pardon,
 Or mitigate his doom.—A mighty Angel
 With flaming sword forbids his longer stay,
 And drives the loiterer forth; nor must he take
 One last and farewell round.—At once he lost
 His glory, and his God.—If mortal now

And

And forely maim'd, no wonder.—*Man has sinn'd.*
 Sick of his blifs, and bent on new adventures,
Evil he would needs try : Nor try'd in vain.
 (Dreadful experiment! destructive measure!
 Where the worst thing could happen, is success.)
 Alas! too well he sped : —The *Good* he scorn'd,
 Stalk'd off reluctant, like an ill-us'd ghost,
 Not to return; — or if it did, its visits
 Like those of *Angels*, short and far between :
 Whilst the black *Dæmon* with his hell-'scap'd Train,
 Admitted once into its better room,
 Grew loud and mutinous, nor would be gone;
 Lording it o'er the *Man*; who now too late
 Saw the rash error, which he could not mend :
 An error fatal not to him alone,
 But to his future sons, his fortune's heirs.
 Inglorious bondage! — Human nature groines
 Beneath a vassalage so vile and cruel,
 And its vast body bleeds through ev'ry vein.

What havock hast thou made, foul monster, *Sin!*
 Greatest and first of Ills.—The fruitful parent

Of

Of Woes of all dimensions!—But for *thee*
 Sorrow had never been:—All-noxious Thing,
 Of vilest nature!—Other sorts of Evils
 Are kindly circumscrib'd, and have their bounds.
 The fierce *Volcano*, from his burning entrails
 That belches molten Stone and globes of Fire,
 Involv'd in pitchy clouds of smoke and stench,
 Marrs the adjacent fields, for some leagues round,
 And there it stops.—The big-swoln *Inundation*,
 Of mischief more diffusive, raving loud,
 Buries whole tracks of country, threat'ning more;
 But that too has its Shore it cannot pass.
 More dreadful far than these! *Sin* has laid waste,
 Not here and there a country, but a *World*:
 Dispatching at a wide-extended blow
 Entire mankind; and for their sakes defacing
 A whole Creation's beauty with rude hands;
 Blasting the foodful grain, the loaded branches,
 And marking all along its way with ruin.
 Accursed Thing!—Oh! where shall Fancy find
 A proper name to call thee by, expressive
 Of all thy horrors?—Pregnant womb of Ills!

Of Temper so transcendently malign,
 That Toads and Serpents of most deadly kind,
 Compar'd to thee, are harmless.—Sickneſſes
 Of ev'ry ſize and ſymptom, racking pains,
 And blueſt plagues, are thine.—See how the fiend
 Profuſely ſcatters the contagion round!
 Whilſt deep-mouth'd Slaughter, bellowing at her heels,
 Wades deep in blood new-ſpilt; yet for to-morrow
 Shapes out new work of great uncommon daring,
 And inly pines till the dread blow is ſtruck.

But hold,—I've gone too far; too much diſcover'd
 My Father's nakedneſs, and Nature's ſhame.
 Here let me pauſe, and drop an honeſt Tear,
 One burſt of filial duty and condolence,
 O'er all thoſe ample deſerts *Death* hath ſpread,
 This *Chaos* of mankind.—O great *Man-eater*!
 Whoſe ev'ry day is *Carnival*, not fated yet!
 Unheard-of *Epicure*! without a fellow!
 The veryeſt *Gluttons* do not always cram;
 Some intervals of abſtinence are fought
 To edge the Appetite: *Thou* ſeekeſt none.

Methinks

Methinks the countless swarms thou hast devour'd,
 And thousands that each hour thou gobblest up;
This, less than *this*, might gorge thee to the full.
 But ah! rapacious still, thou gap'st for more:
 Like one, whole days defrauded of his meals,
 On whom lank Hunger lays her skinny hand,
 And whets to keenest eagerness his cravings.
 (As if diseases, massacres, and poison,
 Famine, and war, were not thy Caterers.)

But know, that thou must *render up thy Dead*,
 And with high Int'rest too.—They are not thine;
 But only in thy keeping for a season,
 Till the great promis'd day of Restitution;
 When loud diffusive sound from brazen trump
 Of strong-lung'd Cherub, shall alarm thy Captives,
 And rouse the long, long sleepers into life,
 Day-light, and liberty.—

Then must thy Gates fly open, and reveal
 The mines that lay long forming under ground,
 In their dark cells immur'd; but now full ripe,
 And pure as silver from the crucible,

That twice has stood the torture of the fire
 And inquisition of the forge.—We know,
 Th' illustrious Deliverer of mankind,
 THE SON OF GOD, thee foil'd.—Him in thy pow'r
 Thou could'st not hold : — self-vigorous he rose,
 And, shaking off thy fetters, soon retook
 Those spoils his voluntary yielding lent :
 (Sure pledge of our releasement from thy thrall !)
 Twice twenty days he sojourn'd here on earth,
 And shew'd himself alive to *chosen Witnesses*,
 By proofs so strong, that the most slow assenting
 Had not a scruple left.—This having done,
 He mounted up to heav'n.—Methinks I see him
 Climb the aerial heights, and glide along
 Athwart the seivering clouds : But the faint eye,
 Flung backwards in the chace, soon drops its hold ;
 Disabled quite, and jaded with pursuing.
 Heaven's portals wide expand to let him in ;
 Nor are his friends shut out : As some great Prince
 Not for himself alone procures admission,
 But for his train : — It was his Royal will,
 That where he is, there should his followers be.

Death

Death only lies between.—A gloomy path!
 Made yet more gloomy by our coward fears:
 But nor untrod, nor tedious: The fatigue
 Will soon go off.—Besides there's no by-road
 To bliss.—Then why, like ill-condition'd children,
 Start we at transient hardships in the way
 That leads to purer air, and softer skies,
 And a ne'er-setting sun?—Fools that we are!
 We wish to be, where Sweets unwith'ring, bloom;
 But strait our wish revoke, and will not go.
 So have I seen, upon a summer's ev'n,
 Fast by the riv'let's brink, a Youngster play:
 How wishfully he looks to stem the tide!
 This moment resolute, next unresolv'd:
 At last he dips his foot; but as he dips,
 His fears redouble, and he runs away
 From th' inoffensive stream, unmindful now
 Of all the flow'rs that paint the further bank,
 And smil'd so sweet of late.—Thrice welcome *Death!*
 That after many a painful bleeding step
 Conducts us to our home, and lands us safe
 On the long-wish'd for shore.—Prodigious change!

Our

Our bane turn'd to a blessing!—*Death* disarm'd
 Loses her feltness quite.—All thanks to him
 Who scourg'd the venom out.—Sure *the last end*
 Of the good Man is *Peace!*—How calm his *Exit!*
 Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
 Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.
 Behold him in the evening-tide of Life,
 A life well spent, whose early care it was
 His riper years should not upbraid his green:
 By unperceiv'd degrees he wears away;
 Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting.
 (High in his faith and hopes,) look how he reaches
 After the prize in view! and, like a bird
 That's hamper'd, struggles hard to get away:
 Whilst the glad gates of sight, are wide expanded
 To let new glories in, the first fair fruits
 Of the fast-coming harvest.—*Then!*—Oh *then!*
 Each earth-born joy grows vile, or disappears,
 Shrunk to a thing of nought.—Oh! how he longs
 To have his passport sign'd, and be dismiss'd!
 'Tis done! and now he's happy!—The glad *Soul*
 Has not a wish uncrown'd.—Ev'n the lag *Flesh*

Rest,

Rests too in Hope of meeting once again
 Its better half, never to funder more.
 Nor shall it hope in vain : — The time draws on
 When not a single spot of burial-earth,
 Whether on Land, or in the spacious Sea,
 But must give back its long-committed dust
 Inviolatè : — And faithfully shall these
 Make up the full account ; — not the least atom
 Imbezzl'd, or mislaid, of the whole tale.
 Each *Soul* shall have a *Body* ready furnish'd ;
 And each shall have his own. — Hence ye profane,
 Ask not, how this can be ? — Sure the same pow'r
 That rear'd the piece at first, and took it down,
 Can re-assemble the loose scatter'd parts,
 And put them as they were. — Almighty God
 Has done much more ; nor is his arm impair'd
 Thro' length of days : And what he can, he will :
 His Faithfulness stands bound to see it done.
 When the dread Trumpet sounds, the slumb'ring
 dust,
 (Not unattentive to the call,) shall wake :
 And ev'ry joint possess its proper place,

With

With a new elegance of form, unknown
 To its first state.—Nor shall the conscious *Soul*
 Mistake its partner, but amidst the Croud,
 Singling its other half, into its arms
 Shall rush, with all th' impatience of a Man
 That's new come home, who, having long been
 absent,

With haste runs over ev'ry different room,
 In pain to see the whole.—Thrice happy meeting!
 Nor *Time*, nor *Death*, shall ever part them more.

'Tis but a Night, a long and moonless Night,
 We make the *Grave* our bed, and then are gone.

Thus, at the shut of ev'n, the weary Bird
 Leaves the wide air, and in some lonely brake
 Cows down, and dozes till the dawn of day,
 Then claps his well-fledg'd wings, and bears away.

F I N I S.

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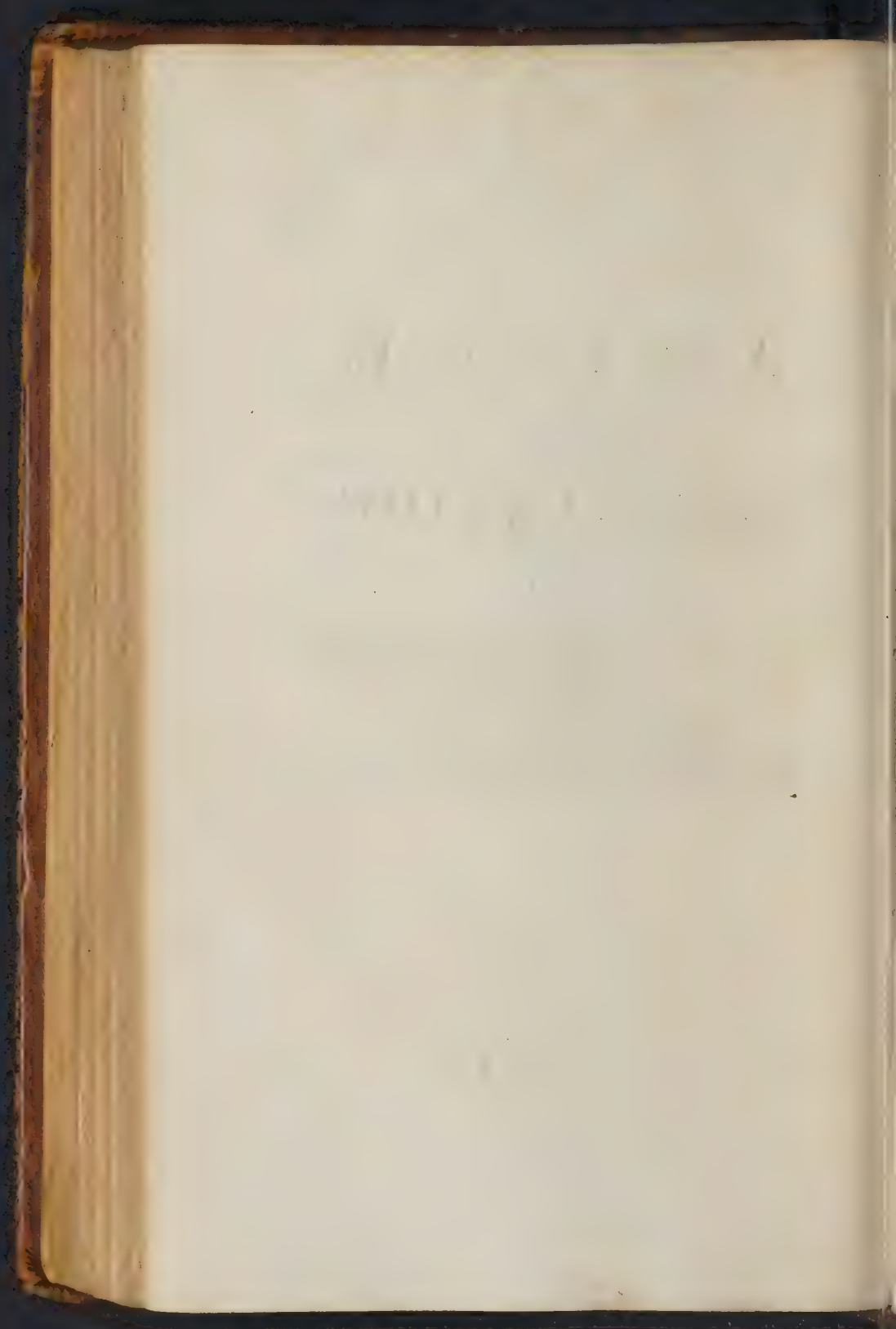
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“ Age; and the whole History we have of his Life
“ till that Time, is but one continued Account of
“ the Behaviour of a noble Soul struggling under in-
“ numerable Pains and Distempers.” *Spectator*,
vol. 2. N° 116.

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F O R A
P E R S O N I N D E J E C T I O N
O F M I N D,
B Y M. D E F E N E L O N.



A D V I C E
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M D C C L .

THE HISTORY OF

THE

ROYAL NAVY

FROM THE FIRST

ESTABLISHMENT

OF THE

NAVY

TO THE PRESENT

STATE

OF THE

NAVY

OF GREAT BRITAIN

AND IRELAND

BY

JOHN H. MACKAY

ESQ.

F E N E L O N

O N

D E J E C T I O N,

O R

L O W N E S S O F S P I R I T S.

AS to what regards a certain lowness of spirits, that contracts the heart, and damps it; these two rules seem to me of importance. The first is, to remedy this lowness, by the means Providence furnishes us: for example, not to overload ourselves with toilsome affairs; that we may not succumb under an unequal burden. to husband not only the strength of the body; but, even that of the

A

mind; by not taking things upon ourselves, in which we should reckon too much on our own courage. to reserve, always, hours for contemplation; for reading; for encouraging ourselves by good conversations; even being gay; in order to unbend, all at once, the mind along with the body; according to the occasion.

WE must, besides, have some sure, and discreet person; to whom we may unbosom ourselves, about every thing, that concerns not the secret of another. for this unloading eases, and enlarges the oppress'd heart.

PAINS too long kept in, often swell, even to bursting the heart. If they could be exhal'd, we shou'd see they do not merit all the bitterness they have occasioned.

NOTHING draws a soul so much out of a certain profound darkness, as the simplicity, and lowliness; with which, she exposes her discouragements at the expence of her glory: demanding light and consolation, in the communion she ought to have, among the children of God.

THE second rule is to bear peacefully all the involuntary impressions of dejection we suffer; in spite of the helps and precautions, we have been just now explaining.

THE internal discouragements make us go more speedily, than every thing else, in the way of faith: provided they do not make us stand still; and the involuntary slackness of the soul does not deliver her up to this dejection; that seizes, as it

were, by force, on the whole internal.

A STEP made in this state, is always a gigantic one; it is more worth than a thousand made in a disposition more sweet and consoling. We have nothing to do then but despise our discouragement, and be always going on, in order to render this state of weakness more useful and grand, than that of courage and the most heroic strength.

O! how deceitful is that sensible courage, that renders all easy; that does and suffers all; that is well-pleased with itself for never hesitating. O! how it nourishes self-confidence; and a certain upliftedness of heart. This courage, that sometimes wonderfully edifies the public, nou-

rishtes within a certain satisfaction and testimony we render ourselves, that is a subtil poison.

WE relish our own virtue, are complacent in it, and well-pleased with ourselves for its strength.

A SOUL, weaken'd and humbled, that finds no longer any refuge in herself, that fears, that is troubled, that is sorrowful even to death, that crys out, in fine, as Jesus Christ, when he was in the garden, O God! O my God! why hast thou forsaken me? is much more purified, more loosened from herself, more annihilated and dead to all self-desire, than strong souls, who enjoy in peace the fruits of their virtue.

HAPPY the soul! that God casts

down; that God bruises; from whom God has taken away all strength in herself, that she may no longer support herself, but in him; that sees her poverty, that is content with it; that bears, besides the crosses without, the great internal cross of discouragement; without which all the others would weigh nothing.

O N

ON
DISSIPATION
AND
DEJECTION OF MIND.

I. YOU are in pain about two things; the one, to shun dissipation; and, the other, to support yourself against dejection. for dissipation; you will never cure yourself of that by forced reflexions. hope not to perform the work of grace by the * means and industry of nature. content yourself with giving your will to God without reserve; and when the thoughts of any state of pain come into your mind, always think on it so as that you would accept

* les refforts.

of it, by an abandoning of yourself to his divine providence.

TAKE great care, never to go to meet these thoughts of the crosses: but when God permits them to come upon you without your having sought for them, never let them pass without fruit.

ACCEPT, in spite of the reluctancies and horrors of nature, whatever God presents to your mind, as a trial by which he might exercise your faith. do not put yourself at all in pain to know if you shall have strength to execute, in the occasion, what at a distance you desire to do. the occasion when present will have its own grace. but the grace of the moment, in which you think of these crosses,

is, heartily, to accept them, at the time, God shall give you them.

THIS foundation laid; walk on, in tranquillity, and confidence. provided this disposition of your will be not changed, by voluntary attachments to something against the order of God; it will subsist, always.

YOUR imagination will be wandering, on a thousand vain objects. it will, even, be more, or less agitated; according to the places you are in: and, according as it is more or less disordered, by objects, more striking, or languishing. but, what, then? the imagination, as St. Therese says, is the fool of the house: she never ceases, making noise; and, shining. the mind, itself, is drawn away by her. it cannot help seeing the objects she

presents it. its attention to images is unavoidable, and this attention is a real straying. but, provided it be involuntary, it never separates us from God: it is only the straying of the will that does all the harm.

IF your will never concur to your straying, you never will stray; and it will be the truth to say of you, your contemplation has never decayed. every time you perceive your straying; let it fall, without combating it; and, return gently, to the side of God; without any struggle of mind.

WHEN you are not sensible of this straying; it will not be a straying of the heart. as soon as you perceive it; lift up your eyes toward God. the fidelity you have in re-entering

his presence every time you are sensible of your state, will make you deserve the favour of a more frequent presence. and this, if I am not mistaken, is the way to render this presence very soon familiar.

THIS ready fidelity to turn away from other objects, every time the straying is observed, will not be long in a soul without a frequent and easy recollection. but it must not be imagined we can enter into this state by efforts of our own. such a struggling would render you constrained, scrupulous, uneasy in the affairs and conversations where you have occasion for being free. you would be always in fear lest the presence of God escaped you; always running to recover it, you would

be enveloped in all the phantoms of your imagination.

THUS the presence of God that ought, by its sweetness and light, to facilitate our application to all the other objects we have occasion to consider in the order of God, would render you, on the contrary, always in agitation, and incapable of the external functions, of your condition.

NEVER be uneasy then that this sensible presence of God has escaped you; but, above all, be much upon your guard, against desiring a presence of God, supported by reason and reflections.

CONTENT yourself, in the course of the day and detail of your occu-

pations, with a general and confused view of God; in such sort, that, if it were asked you then, what is the disposition of your heart? it would be the truth to say, it tended to God, altho' you were then attentive to some other object.

Do not put yourself at all in pain for the wanderings of your imagination that you cannot command. we stray often from fear of straying, and after that, from regret of having done it.

WHAT would you say of a man, who, in a journey, instead of going on always without stopping, should spend his time in foreseeing the falls he might make? and, when he made any one, in returning to see the place where he had fallen?

GO on, go on, would you say to him. I say the same to you. go on, without looking behind you; and, without stopping, walk, says the apostle, that you may the more abound. the abounding of the love of God will correct you more than your own inquietudes, and frequent returns on yourself.

THIS rule is simple: but nature, accustomed to do all, by sentiment and reflexion, finds it simple, even to excess.

WE would assist ourselves and give ourselves more spring. but 'tis in this the goodness of the rule consists, that it keeps in a state of pure faith; where we support ourselves on God alone; to whom we abandon ourselves, and

where we die to ourselves, by suppressing whatever is of self.

BY this we do not multiply external actions, that might constrain persons very much employed, or hurt their health. we turn these actions all to loving, but, to loving simply. thus we are never overloaded. for we bear only what we love. this rule, taken right, is sufficient also for curing dejection.

II. DEJECTION, or melancholy, proceeds often from this, that, when seeking God, we do not feel him enough, to be content. the desire of feeling him is not the desire of possessing him. but it is the desire of being assured, for the love of ourselves, that we possess him, in order to our own consolation.

NATURE, damped and discouraged, is impatient to draw self from pure faith, where she wants all support: she is, in that state, as in the air, she would feel her own advancement.

AT the sight of her faults our pride frets; and we take this fretting of our pride for a sentiment of penitence.

WE would, from self-love, have the pleasure of seeing ourselves perfect. we chide ourselves for not being so. we are impatient, haughty, and out of humour at ourselves and others. deplorable error! as if the work of God would be accomplished by our chagrin! as if we could unite ourselves to the God of peace by losing our peace within.

MARTHA! Martha! why art thou

troubled about so many things for the service of Jesus Christ? one only is needful, to love him, and keep attentive at his feet.

WHEN we are intirely abandoned to God; all is done, without doing any thing. we let ourselves be conducted with confidence. for what is to come, we will, without reserve, whatever God shall will; and we shut our eyes that we may foresee nothing. we apply ourselves, however, in what is present, to accomplish his will.

SUFFICIENT for every day is its own good and evil. this daily accomplishment of the will of God, is the coming of his kingdom within us, and, at the same time, our daily bread.

WE would think ourselves infidels, and guilty of a Pagan distrust, if we desired to penetrate into the futurity that God conceals from us. we leave it to him. it is his to make sweet or bitter, short or long. let him do what is good in his own eyes.

THE most perfect preparation for this futurity, whatever it be, is to die to all wills of our own, that we may wholly give ourselves up to that of God.

As manna had all tastes; this general disposition contains all graces, and all sentiments, suitable to all states God may place us in hereafter.

III. WHEN we are thus ready for all, it is in this bottom of the abyss

we begin to take footing. we are as calm about the past as about the future.

WE suppose of ourselves all the worst we can; but we throw ourselves blindly into the arms of God: we forget ourselves; we lose ourselves: and this is the most perfect penitence, this oblivion of ourselves. for all conversion consists, only in renouncing ourselves to be employed in God. this oblivion is the martyrdom of self-love. we would love a hundred times better, to contradict, condemn, torment ourselves, mind and body, than forget ourselves.

THIS oblivion is an annihilation of self-love, in which it finds no refuge. then the heart enlarges; we are eased by unburdening the whole weight

of ourselves, with which we were oppressed. we are astonished, to see how straight and simple the way is. we believed, there was occasion for a continual struggle, and always some new action. on the contrary, we perceive, there is little to do; that it is sufficient, without reasoning, either on the past, or the future, to look on God with confidence; as a good father, who leads us, in the present moment, as by the hand.

IF by any straying of the mind we lose sight of him, without stopping at this, we turn again toward him from whom we had wandered. if we commit faults, the penitence we have for them is all of love; we turn again toward God; and he makes us feel what is his will.

THE sin appears hideous: but the humiliation rising from it, and for which God has permitted it, appears good.

As much as the reflections of pride on our own faults are bitter, restless, and chagrin, so much is the return of the soul to God, after its faults, recollected, peaceful, and supported by confidence.

you will find, by experience, how much this simple and peaceful return will facilitate your correction, more than all your vexations for the faults that prevail on you.

ONLY be faithful in turning yourself, with simplicity, toward God, the moment you perceive your fault. it will be in vain for you, to

chicane with yourself. it is not with yourself you ought to take your measures. when you torment yourself about your own miseries, I see nobody in your council, but you alone with yourself. poor council! in which God is not.

WHO will reach out his hand to help you out of the mire? will it be you? ha! 'tis you yourself who are sunk into it, and cannot get out. besides, this mire is yourself. the whole source of your misfortune, is, you cannot get out of yourself.

do you hope to get out of it by conversing always with yourself? and nourishing your sensibility, by the sight of your weaknesses? you do nothing, but increase your tenderness for yourself, by all these re-

turns. but the least view of God would calm your heart, disordered by your being thus busy about yourself. his presence works, always, the going out of ourselves; and, this is what we want. go out of yourself, then, and you will be in peace. but, how shall we go out of ourselves? we need only turn gently, on the side of God, and form, by little and little, the habit of it; by our fidelity in returning to him, every time we perceive ourselves stray'd.

As for the natural dejection occasioned by melancholy, it proceeds only from the body. thus, regimen and medicines diminish it.

IT is true, it always returns; but it is not voluntary. When God gives

it, we support it in peace, as the fever, and other bodily disorders.

THE imagination is in a profound darkness. it is all hung in mourning. but the will, that is nourish'd only by pure faith, is well satisfy'd to undergo the trial of all these impressions. thus, we are in peace; because immediately we are with ourselves, and resign'd to God.

THE question is not, what we feel; but, what we will. we will whatever we have; we will nothing of what we have not. we would not be delivered by ourselves, from what we suffer, because it belongs only to God, to distribute crosses and consolations. we are in joy, amid tribulations; as the apostle says: not a joy of the senses, but a joy of pure will.

THE impious, amid their pleasures, have a constrained will, because they are never content with their condition. they would drive away certain disgusts, and taste still some pleasures they want.

ON the contrary, the faithful soul has a will constrained in nothing; she accepts freely every kind of pain God gives her. she wills it, she loves it, she embraces it, she would not quit it, even tho' it cost her but a single desire: because, that desire would be a selfish one; and, contrary to her abandon to providence, which she will never prevent, in any thing.

IF any thing is capable of setting the heart at large, and making it free; it is this abandon. it diffuses in the heart a peace, more overflowing than the rivers; and, a justice, that is as the

depths of the sea. (an expression of Isaiah.) If any thing can render a man's mind serene, dissipate its scruples and its dark fears, soften its pains by the unction of love, give him a certain vigour in all his actions, and shed the joy of the Holy Spirit, even on his countenance, and in his words; it is this simple, free, and child-like conduct, in the arms of God.

BUT, we reason too much, and hurt ourselves with reasoning. there is a temptation to reasoning we must be afraid of, as of other temptations.

THERE is an occupation about ourselves, nice, restless, and distrustful; which is a temptation so much the more subtle, that we do not look on it as one; and that on the

contrary, we sink into it, more and more; because we take it for the vigilance commanded in the Gospel.

IV. THE vigilance Jesus Christ enjoins, is a faithful attention to love always, and accomplish the will of God, in the present moment; according to the signs we have of it. but, it consists not in troubling and putting ourselves to the torture; and being incessantly employed about ourselves, rather than lift our eyes toward God; from whom comes our only help against ourselves.

WHY, under pretence of vigilance, will we be obstinate to discover in ourselves, what it is not the will of God we should see, during this life? Why lose, by that, the fruit of pure faith, and inward peace? Why turn away from the presence of God;

which, it is his will to render continual to us. he has not said, Be yourselves always the object before which you shall walk: but, he has said, Walk BEFORE ME, and become perfect.

DAVID, full of his spirit, has said: I saw God always before me. and, again; My eyes are always lifted toward the Lord, that he may guard my feet from the nets. the danger is at his feet. his eyes, however, are on high. it is less useful to consider our danger, than the assistance of God. beside, we see all reunited in God. we see, there, both human misery, and the divine goodness. a single glance of a soul upright and pure, be it never so simple, perceives all in this infinite light.

BUT, on the contrary, what can we

see in our own darkness? except, our very darkness. O my God? provided, I never cease to see thee; I shall never cease to see myself, in all my miseries. and I shall see myself much better in thee, than in myself. true vigilance, is, to see in thee, thy will, that I may accomplish it; and, not reason, without end, on the state of my own.

WHEN external occupations hinder me from seeing thee alone, by shutting, in contemplation, the avenues of my senses; yet, even then, at least, I shall see thee, O Lord! doing all, in all.

I SHALL every where see, with joy, thy will accomplish'd, both within me, and without. I shall incessantly say, Amen; as the blessed. I shall always sing in my heart, the

song of the celestial Sion. I shall bless thee, even in the wicked; who, by their bad will, accomplish, still in spite of themselves, thy will, all-just, all-holy, and all-powerful. in the chaste liberty of the spirit, thou givest thy children, I shall act and speak in simplicity, chearfulness and confidence. ‘Tho’ I pass thro’ the shades
‘ of death, I will fear nothing; for,
‘ thou art always with me. I will
‘ never seek any danger; never enter into any engagements, but with
‘ signs of thy providence; that they
‘ may be my strength and consolation in it. even, in the states, where
‘ thy call will support me; I will
‘ give, to recollection, contemplation and retirement, all the days, the
‘ hours, the moments, thou shalt
‘ leave me, free. I will never quit this
‘ blessed state, farther than thou
‘ shalt call me, thyself, to some exter-

‘nal function. then, I will go out of
‘thee, in appearance; but, thou
‘wilt go out with me. and, in this
‘apparent out-going, thou wilt carry
‘me in thy bosom. I will not seek
‘myself, in my commerce with the
‘creatures. I will not be afraid, re-
‘collection diminish my agreeable-
‘ness among them, and make my
‘conversation dry. for, my will is
‘not to please them, farther than I
‘must do it, to please thee.

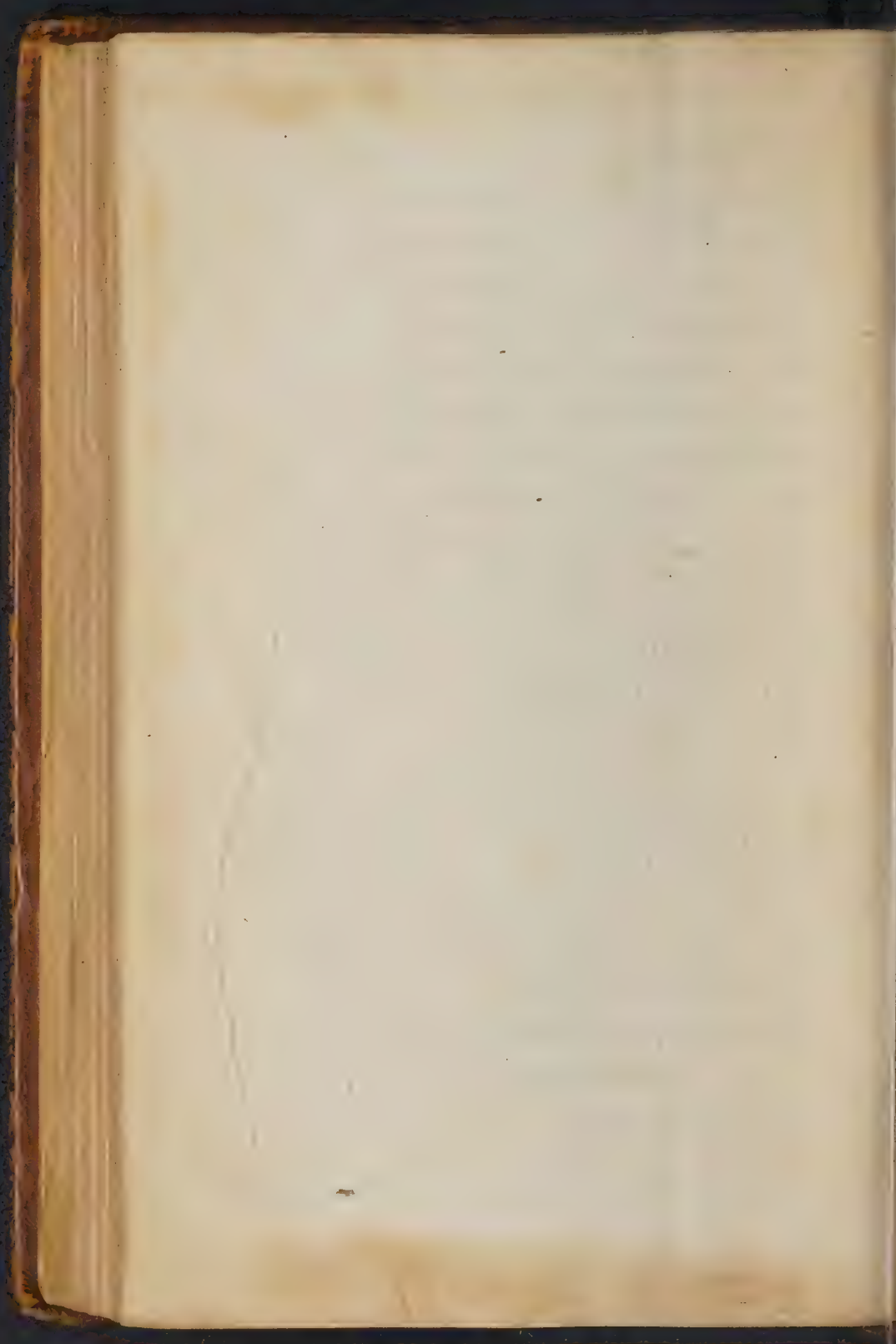
‘IF thou wilt make use of me, for
‘thy work on them, I surrender my-
‘self, and without reflexion on my-
‘self, will, in simplicity, pour forth
‘on them, whatever of thy gifts thou
‘hast made to flow on me. I will
‘not walk, groping, by falling al-
‘ways back on myself. however
‘dangerous and dissipating this func-
‘tion may be, I will behave myself
‘in simplicity before thee, with an

‘ upright intention; knowing how
‘ good the Father is, before whom
‘ I walk; and, that he desires no
‘ subtilty in his own.

‘ IF on the contrary, thou wilt not
‘ make use of me for others, I will
‘ not offer myself. I will not go be-
‘ fore, in any thing. I will do, in
‘ peace, the other things, to which
‘ thou hast bounded me. for, accor-
‘ ding to the attraction of the state
‘ of abandon, thou hast given me,
‘ I desire, nor refuse, nothing. I am
‘ ready for all, and I consent to be
‘ useless to all.

‘ SOUGHT for, rejected, known,
‘ not known, applauded, inveighed
‘ against, what is it to me? ’tis THEE,
‘ I seek, and not myself; thee, and
‘ not thy gifts; distinguish’d from
‘ thee and from thy love, all condi-
‘ tions are indifferent to me.

F I N I S.



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